THE Nation

VOLUME 149 NEW YORK • SATURDAY • JULY 8, 1939 NUMBER 2

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The Shape of Things

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THE ACTION OF THE HOUSE IN AMENDING the neutrality bill to apply a mandatory embargo to the sale of arms and ammunition to belligerents is more serious as a gesture than as a practical measure. It has already been openly welcomed by the dictators as a blow at France and Britain and has been greeted with equal dismay in those countries. Léon Blum, writing in the *Populaire,* accurately described the moral effect of the change. "The immediate question," he said, "is not whether, once war was started, such or such a power would be induced to take such or such an attitude, but whether this attitude, proclaimed publicly now, could turn the dictators from going to war." The practical effect of the amendment is less serious. The embargo would not affect the sale of such crucial secondary war materials as oil and cotton and planes and machines, goods which the United States could most usefully supply. But the matter is not clinched by the House vote. The Senate committee has not reported out the bill and it seems possible that it may fail to do so. That would leave matters as they now stand, which is in the worst possible position. The new bill even as amended by the House is greatly preferable to the existing measure which would effectively hamstring all aid to the anti-fascist powers in case of war.

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IN THE CONGRESSIONAL HOLOCAUST OF THE last week, the bill to admit 20,000 refugee children was one of the innocent victims. It was approved by the Senate Immigration Committee with the inclusion of a proviso that the children admitted would have to be deducted from the present quotas. By this simple change the committee wiped out the whole point and purpose of the bill. The refugees admitted under present quota restrictions comprise persons of all ages who can no longer live under the terror to which they and their families have been subjected. The sponsors of the refugee-children bill had no wish to slam the door in the face of the thousands now awaiting their turn on the quota. Their hope was to bring in an additional group of young children who would, in advance of their arrival,

Published weekly and copyright, 1939, in the U. S. A. by The Nation, Inc., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Entered as second-class matter, December 18, 1897, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1897.

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be guaranteed homes and support. To admit the 20,000 children as part of the next two years' quota is in effect to reduce it by that number. That this was the intention of the committee may be conjectured from the fact that it also approved two of Senator Reynolds's anti-alien measures, a bill suspending all immigration for five years and another requiring aliens to be fingerprinted. It is not expected that these unthinkable measures will be adopted in this session, but they indicate a tendency which may well prove strong enough to wreck the effort to rescue a few of the youngest victims of Hitler's permanent pogrom.

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ONLY A FEW DAYS AGO A PAN AMERICAN Clipper rose from the still waters of Manhasset Bay in Long Island Sound and carried a cargo of paying passengers from the United States to Europe. This was a breath-taking event, symbol of a new era in the history of communication. But, while it made the front page, the people of both continents responded with only mild interest. This seemed curious. It was partly to be explained, no doubt, by the long, careful, unsensational prelude of test and mail flights which had accustomed the public mind to the fact of trans-Atlantic air voyages long before the passenger service was installed. But it was partly due to the nature of the general news of the past week. People were thinking about the threatened Nazi conquest of Poland; not about the conquest of 3,000 miles of ocean by an alliance of scientific achievement and business enterprise. If they stopped to consider the meaning of the Clipper's first passenger trip, their wonder and admiration were almost certainly qualified with fear. The Atlantic is now only twenty-four hours wide. It is a commentary on the times that this thought today is more sobering than exhilarating.

*

THE SIEGE OF TIENTSIN HAS BEEN EASED slightly by British capitulation to Japan on the question of discussing the "broader" aspects of British-Japanese relationships. Although the Japanese extremists appear to have given ground in permitting the conference dealing with the issue to be held in Tokyo rather than Tientsin, Britain retreated to the extent of agreeing to discuss not only the surrender of the four Chinese whose delivery has been demanded by Japan but a series of additional demands acceptance of which would be tantamount to making Britain an ally of Japan in its invasion of China. Japan has asked for the right of policing the British concession against Chinese political activities, and has demanded that Britain "cooperate" in suppressing such activities. This much Britain is apparently prepared to grant as a gesture of appeasement. But the crucial Japanese demand is for "economic cooperation," which involves British financial support for Japan's fiat paper money in North China and the turning over to Japan of some $10,000,000 worth of silver in the Tientsin banks. Whether Britain will bow to this demand is still an open question. The strong stand taken by the United States in refusing to keep its ships out of Foochow and Wenchow harbors should stiffen British resistance. But there is real danger that the rising tension in Europe may induce Chamberlain to make peace on any terms in an unjustified hope of thereby separating Japan from the axis.

*

J. MONROE SMITH, LATE PRESIDENT OF Louisiana State University, who borrowed $500,000 on faked credit of the University and lost $430,000 of it speculating in cotton, has given himself up in Canada. He said he didn't know he was wanted until he read it in the papers! His co-speculators—we doubt that he worked alone—will probably turn out to be as prominent as Smith in Louisiana politics. Governor Leche's hurried resignation in favor of Earl Long, the long-lost Huey's brother, has not clarified the mystery; his latest statement that in future his "only political purpose will be to further the political interests of President Roosevelt" may be an appeal for mercy in Washington. Smith's income-tax returns are being investigated and an inquiry into the use of WPA funds is scheduled. These may be, as someone has said, acorns from which oaks will grow. But there are voices in Louisiana calling for a thoroughgoing investigation of the state by the Department of Justice, and we think it is in order. Will the Democratic Administration avoid the issue as it did in New Jersey or will it help to throw the Long machine into the dust heap alongside that of Prendergast? Time—and politics—will tell.

*

WE ARE INTERESTED TO NOTE THAT THE steel industry is about to recover from a major crisis. It seems that in recent months a few cases of price competition in the industry have actually been recorded. Since the industry has spent years seeking to overcome this unpleasant phenomenon, the cause for such a departure from accepted custom must be sought in some extremely vital issue facing it. The New York *Times* of June 11 supplies the clue. It seems that the steel industry has been divided into two camps: the United States Steel Company, which recognizes the C. I. O., and the other steel companies, which do not recognize the C. I. O. The wrath of the smaller companies against the titan for dealing with organized labor has, it seems, mounted to prodigious proportions. Large in its might and confident in its power, United States Steel has sought to overlook the slings and arrows of outraged competitors; but its efforts have now been brought to an end. Verbal invective by Girdler and Weir is one thing; price-cutting is another. When the smaller companies vented their ire by "chiseling" on the accepted price structure, the United

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States Steel Company was forced to reform. It is now in the process of "reorienting" its labor policies. Only recently, its Iron and Steel Institute delivered a blistering attack on the National Labor Relations Board. This new policy of appeasement has brought hope to the industry that the unfortunate price "war" may soon be a thing of the past. In wondrous ways, indeed, do the forces of competition bring about harmonious relationships, economic balance, and the coveted equilibrium.

*

SCHUSCHNIGG'S THIRTEEN-YEAR-OLD SON has been forced to join the Hitler youth in Vienna. His father is still a prisoner of the "greatest German ever born" as Hitler described himself in the course of the fateful interview of February, 1938, in Berchtesgaden between himself and the Austrian Chancellor. Now the "greatest German" has ordered that the child of his unhappy foe be taught that he is the son of a scoundrel—nothing less will be told young Schuschnigg in the Nazi organization which his father in his time suppressed. Our minds are set on great events, but we should not overlook the "little" things. The dispatch from Vienna reveals a side of Nazi sadism unsurpassed in its subtle cruelty. Against the demagogic speeches of Hitler about justice, living space, and his duty to defend the German nation against a world of enemies stands the "humanity" he practices on a helpless little boy in Vienna.

Silver and Spite

SILVER and spite, joined in an alliance, won what may prove a costly victory in the vote by the Senate to take from Mr. Roosevelt further power to devalue the dollar. By the time this appears in print the Senate may have restored the devaluation club the President needs to preserve monetary law and order. But we feel safe in predicting that some of our most respectable anti-New Deal politicians will have a hard time living down their part in this legislative foray against Mr. Roosevelt, for it shows that they are ready to sacrifice the nation's best interests to satisfy their overwhelming hatred of the President and to link hands with any selfish interest to win a temporary victory over him. Their coalition with the Senators from the silver states overrode the most cherished conservative principles. When the President, at the beginning of 1938, reduced the price for newly mined domestic silver from 77.57 cents an ounce to 64.64 cents, his action was approved in conservative circles. "At last," *Business Week* commented, "the country is approaching reason on the silver-price question . . . [Mr. Roosevelt's] new proclamation is in effect a sweeping admission that the subsidy is economically indefensible." A year and a half later an alliance between the silverites and Republicans to restore this economically indefensible subsidy to 77.57 cents is supported with smug apologetics by organs of "sound finance."

It is easy to dwell on the inconsistency that leads the pontifical Vandenberg and his fellows of the economy bloc to slash allowances for the jobless and at the same time to vote huge additional profits for silver-mine owners. We hope the Administration will make the most of the contrast. The economy bloc appears in an even poorer light when judged by its own standards—maintaining stable monetary conditions, safeguarding the value of the dollar, and so on. If this were 1928 or 1929, it would certainly be unsettling to give the President power to devalue the dollar at will. But at a time when the gold standard has long been suspended the world over, when our trade rivals can at any time devalue their currencies, the attempt to fit the dollar into the vise of a rigid gold standard is an invitation to the rest of the world to devalue. It is a spur to instability. The President's power to devalue has not been used and probably will not need to be used. Its mere existence was enough to prevent England from devaluing the pound last year. The arguments advanced for a rigid gold standard in the right press are anachronistic nonsense, the same kind of economic poppycock that kept us from following England's example in 1931 and freeing ourselves at that time from a gold standard that only works well when there is no pressure on it.

Within the framework of world politics, the action by the Senate seems to us most dangerous, and we hope that it will be rescinded. To deprive the President of reserve power to devalue the dollar would be to undermine the tripartite monetary agreement that is the one link between this country and France and Great Britain at a time when even a limited unity of action is important. To end purchase of foreign silver is to help Japan against China, and to weaken the silver-producing states of Latin America, notably Mexico. American oil interests have sought for some time to choke off purchases of Mexican silver, and it may be significant that the amendment to stop the buying of silver from abroad was made by Townsend of Delaware; the du Ponts are a major factor in the oil industry. On this point again some of our conservatives are guilty of the grossest inconsistency and the most obvious fallacies. We do not recall that the conservative press ever objected to the foreign-lending policy of the Coolidge-Hoover era. The only difference between the purchase of silver from Latin America and the buying of Latin American bonds is that there is more commercial use for silver than for second-hand engraved paper. Both stimulate American trade, create a market abroad for our goods. It might well be argued that purchase of foreign silver is more advantageous than purchase of domestic. Part of the money paid for domes-

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tic purchases increases the profits of the silver-mine owners; it does not add to purchasing power. On the other hand when we buy foreign silver, the foreigner must buy American goods with the entire proceeds. The purchases create jobs in this country. The economy bloc, fresh from committing mayhem on the WPA, has merely voted to enlarge what one might term an SWA, a Silver Works Administration, that does indeed give employment to miners but at the expense of fat rake-offs for mine owners.

Setback in Relief

ABOUT all that can be said for the "compromise" relief bill which was rushed to the President just before the deadline on June 30 was that it averted a closing down of the WPA. While the bill was not quite as reactionary as that which originally passed the House, the improvements were relatively slight. To the credit of the Senate it must be said that many of the worst sections of the bill were rejected when the measure first came before the upper house. Amendments were adopted restoring control to a one-man administrator, increasing the appropriation for the WPA and the NYA, continuing the federal theater project, and eliminating 30-day payless vacations for WPA workers. The limit of federal participation in WPA building projects was raised from $40,000 to $75,000. All of these vital changes were swept away by the House conferees except the top limit for the building projects which was compromised at $52,000, and the provision for one-man control.

The results are disheartening, not only because of the individuals who will suffer by the unjustified cutting down of relief, but as indication of an anachronistic mentality which may delay for years a decent solution of the relief problem. The viewpoint finds its roots in the days when the United States was an agricultural country with plenty of free land on the frontier—a day also when the sense of family and neighborhood was much more deeply ingrained than at present. In those days there was some reason for assuming that a man who had to appeal to charity was a ne'er-do-well, and for making the conditions of relief as humiliating as possible. Today, however, it should be evident even to the most extreme reactionary that the conditions which make relief necessary are wholly beyond the control of the individual. Unemployment and poverty are the result of a breakdown in our economic structure for which society is responsible. It is most unfair, therefore, that relief should be surrounded with safeguards and conditions designed to stigmatize the relief recipient and thus destroy his morale.

Particularly unfortunate is the continuation of the restrictions on the arts projects, which by and large have come the nearest to providing a civilized standard of relief. In some instances, it is true, politics have been played and men have been given jobs for which they were wholly unprepared. But the theater projects in particular have met a very real lack in American life, and produced some superb plays which would not have a chance on the commercial stage. From a strict counting-house point of view, they may have seemed socially wasteful. But in a country physically equipped to produce an abundance of material wealth, it is only logical that well-thought-out government works projects should be concentrated in the cultural and educational spheres.

It is to be hoped that the setback which the Administration suffered on relief will not be reflected in greater caution in next year's program. Many of the Administration's difficulties in this field have not been created so much by too great liberalism as by uncertainty and lack of program. The reactionaries came to Washington this January determined, if they did nothing else, to hamstring the relief program. The Administration forces were not equipped with a well-coordinated, permanent relief program designed to eliminate the abuses which had grown up. Throughout there has been too much a tendency to regard relief as a temporary problem. It has already been with us in aggravated form for nearly ten years; it will almost certainly be with us another ten years even if a much larger measure of recovery is effected. Let us hope that the coming months will be utilized to provide a bold, well-integrated, sound program for submission to the next session of Congress.

The Krivitsky Affair

THE articles in the *Saturday Evening Post* about Soviet Russia, its internal and external policy, signed by a General Krivitsky who claims to have been instrumental in the carrying out of Stalin's Spanish policy, have attracted wide attention. True or false, they made interesting reading. Normally we are informed about the workings of a dictatorship by official handouts or censored dispatches. It is no wonder then that opposition charges win special attention from people who rightly distrust the official statements of even democratic governments.

Four weeks after the first article appeared, the *New Masses* stated that Krivitsky was never a Russian general, that he had never laid eyes on Stalin or Voroshilov, that he could not use a rifle. No proof was offered for these statements. The *New Masses* said that Krivitsky was a certain Schmelka Ginsberg, and his counsel now admits that the last name is correct. That this would not exclude the possibility that the Communist of 1918 from the Austrian-Russian border might later become a Red Army officer assigned to the Soviet secret service in Western

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Europe, is obvious. The *New Masses* in fact granted by implication the assertion that Krivitsky-Ginsberg was in the Russian service. It wrote: "You are just the kind of adventurer that the infamous Yagoda would pick for his anti-Soviet dirty work." The challenge of the *New Masses* contained two other statements, first that Isaac Don Levine, for years a known anti-Soviet writer, ghosted the articles, which he did, and that Suzanne La Follette, described unjustly as a "Trotskyist stalwart," is lending a hand in preparing the material for a book by Krivitsky, which she denies. But these statements had no bearing on the issue of Krivitsky's identity. The *New Masses* did an elaborate job of disclosing the irrelevant.

The *Saturday Evening Post,* in an editorial admitting that Isaac Don Levine wrote the articles and that General Krivitsky was an alias, was able to point out that almost all the leading figures of the Soviet regime and the editors of the *New Masses* as well use noms de guerre. But the *Post* did not dissociate itself from its contributor; it printed a fourth article by him and an editorial which also dodged the issue. It is unthinkable that the editors of the *Post* do not know the identity of General Krivitsky. Anybody familiar with the routine of checking up on an unknown author who comes with sensational material to a magazine of the size, wealth, and reputation of the *Saturday Evening Post* cannot doubt that its editors know more about Krivitsky than they have told so far. The editorial leaves us just where we were before—we have to take the word of the *Saturday Evening Post* editors that Krivitsky is no fraud.

The *New Masses* in last week's issue celebrated a great victory. It started with the statement that the *New Masses* "revealed Krivitsky as an impostor," which is entirely untrue; the *New Masses* only said he was. It said that the *Post* "is now compelled to admit one part of the hoax"—also, to put it mildly, a gross exaggeration. Thousands of articles are ghosted, the mechanical putting down of a story is of no importance as far as its truth is concerned, and no editor commits a crime in using the services of a rewrite man. And the fact that Krivitsky is an alias is surely no confession of a hoax. On the other hand the ineptness of the *New Masses* attack does not free the editors of the *Saturday Evening Post* from the obligation to prove beyond doubt—especially since many statements in Krivitsky's articles are open to serious question—that they did not fall for a swindler, even if he was once a red officer.

A part of the *New Masses* editorial deals with the content of Krivitsky's articles, branding them as pure fabrications. To discuss the validity of Krivitsky's story seriously and thoroughly, as the *New Masses* has not yet done, would have been in order in the first place. It would have helped to clarify the policies of Russia in the mind of many confused people and it would have been a great service to expose the fraud—if there is one. Last and not least it would have been clean and cogent journalism instead of irrelevant sniping which irritates and confuses without shedding any light on the real issues involved.

Appeasement or War?

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

NOT long ago Hitler was reported to have told his military leaders that within six months he would be "master of Europe." This prophecy was uttered in the midst of the late "lull" while he was busy assembling the materials and marshaling his forces for the present full-blown crisis. On another page of this issue Mr. Villard reports a sensational confirmation of Hitler's claim by exceptionally well informed authorities, who predict that the next appeasement, already planned, will in cold fact give Europe into Hitler's hands: "Hitler is to recover for Germany everything taken from it by the Treaty of Versailles—Danzig, the Corridor, Silesia, and Prussian Poland. Part of Poland is to go to Hungary, another part to Lithuania, while Russia is to get Bessarabia, and Germany another part of Rumania."

I shall not argue that this may not happen. Munich happened. Two weeks ago I wrote that a new effort at appeasement was "just around the corner" and since then we have seen a succession of moves no doubt designed to dangle the rewards of virtue before Hitler's nose but certain to encourage his deep-rooted belief that he can go as far as he likes without precipitating war.

Efforts to make a deal over Danzig are certainly under way. Britain has made a bid for a new naval agreement with Germany and invited Hitler to collaborate in restoring "mutual confidence and good will." And even Halifax's speech last Thursday, while a clear and welcome warning that Britain would "resist force," left open a door through which a new appeasement might easily slip. "If we could once be satisfied . . . that we all really wanted peaceful solutions—then I say here definitely that we could discuss the problems that are today causing the world anxiety. In such a new atmosphere we could examine the colonial problem, questions of raw materials, trade barriers, the issue of 'Lebensraum,' the limitation of armaments and any other issue that affects the lives of all European citizens."

These are pre-Munich words, as every person will realize whose memory reaches back to last summer. They are coupled, it is true, with an assertion that some basis "more substantial than verbal undertakings" will be necessary as a basis for a bargain. But what? Halifax does not say, and we shall be excused if we demand of him some similarly substantial proof of good faith. Our suspicions are multiplied by the lack of progress at Moscow.

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Zhdanov's article in the *Pravda* was a sharp challenge to the British-French position. He implied clearly that he (and one must assume that he speaks for the government) believes the long delay has been a maneuver to create an impression of Russian intransigeance so that responsibility for the next capitulation to Hitler might be pinned by the Western powers on the Soviet Government. If this interpretation is true the prospect is a black one; and it would be no brighter if one accepted the rather fantastic suggestion in Mr. Villard's article that Russia is holding off in order to reap territorial gains as a result of Hitler's coming triumph.

Add to these doubts the real difficulties of achieving and implementing a military front against Germany, and the makings of a new Munich accumulate. Poland is geographically hard to defend. A successful defense inevitably involves Russian aid, and even if an agreement is reached between Moscow and the Western powers, the practical problem of armed collaboration between Poland and its old Soviet enemy will not be simple. Nor will it be easy for the British fleet to move to the defense of the Baltic ports. The possibility of its being bottled up there at the start of what would undoubtedly become a general war will not be ignored by the Admiralty. Poland will have to be defended by an attack on Germany from the west. And such an attack would precipitate immediately the full fury of war on a continental scale.

High cards are in Hitler's hands and he is already playing them with the assurance of a past master in the art of psychic attack. But those margins of error are still enormously wide. I'll enumerate a few of the chances that weigh against a "peaceful" conquest of Europe by the Nazis—and then I'll leave the score to be added up by the events of the coming weeks. Only an anonymous "authority" would dare be as sure of the future as were Mr. Villard's informants.

First and most obvious is the apparent effort of the British and French to hurry their war preparations and complete their alliances. If they intend appeasement they are certainly at the same time preparing for its failure. No one can honestly doubt that both nations are working feverishly to get ready for an emergency, and France, at least, seems determined to fight rather than yield—not Danzig or Pomorze but what the surrender of these would mean—the physical security and political independence of its own territory. It is impossible to dismiss the whole preparedness effort as play-acting; but it may well be an anchor to windward. The speech of Halifax seems to me typical of this mood: appeasement, if we can get any encouragement from Hitler; but, if not, we mean business this time.

Second, the Russian alliance. Procrastination may mean sabotage—on one side or both. But if Britain—even under pressure from France—yields on the crucial issue of guaranties to the Baltic states, it will be an evidence of good faith that cannot be dismissed.

Third, the apparent determinaton of the Poles to fight rather than yield. Not only their "idealism," but a streak of irrational recklessness in the Polish nature may make another Munich impossible—even if it is attempted. And to buttress their warlike inclinations, the Poles have the fate of Czechoslovakia as a warning. The fact that they helped to bring the Czechs to their knees and gladly seized their small morsel of territory is to their eternal discredit, but it does not decrease the force of the lesson. In addition the Poles have a promise of support from the Western powers that must be regarded as more binding than the Czech-French alliance proved to be, if only because it was made deliberately for the express purpose of guarding against the danger that now threatens. The Poles can, with better reason than the Czechs, hope that if they fight they will not have to fight alone.

Fourth, there is the hair-trigger situation in Germany itself. Economically the Third Reich is at the stage that the Kaiser's Reich reached only after three years of war. The two articles on conditions inside the country, printed on other pages of this issue, dramatically sum up the dilemma of the Nazi Government. It must have new victories soon or it cannot sustain the strength to win them. If it be said that even now a major war would be insane it must be considered that sane alternatives are not offered. The choices are war, or further Nazi triumphs achieved by means of threat and terror, or a continued struggle for power and position such as has been waged during this past year. A reasonable hope of relaxation is not among them. It could come only as the result of open abandonment by the fascist powers of their aggressive aims. The crucial inner weakness of Germany is not likely to produce any such retreat; it is far more likely to speed the day of decision and lessen the chance of a prolonged non-military struggle.

When will the showdown come? This week or after the harvest? And where? In Danzig or on several fronts at once, including the Far East and the Mediterranean? No one knows. But we know that troops are massing in Danzig and on all the borders of Poland; that the entire Polish fleet is at Gdynia; that Hungary has proposed to Hitler that it take over the rest of Slovakia; that Hitler is forcing Slovakia to hurry to completion two military highways running north toward Poland; that Russian naval maneuvers this summer are to take place in the Baltic. These factors seem to point to an early showdown in Northern Europe. The other day Winston Churchill likened the present crisis to the situation of last September—"but with this difference . . . that this year no means of retreat are open." We hope Hitler believes that; and we hope it is true.

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Happy Fiscal New Year!

BY KENNETH G. CRAWFORD

Washington, June 29

EXACTLY what accounted for the Senate's Fiscal New Year's Eve celebration is one of those little mysteries of parliamentary behaviorism. It was probably part hatred of Roosevelt and part plain exhibitionism. Whatever the explanation, as the end of the 1939 fiscal year approached, the Republican economyites went along with a plan to pay the holdup price of 77½ cents an ounce for domestically mined silver in exchange for votes to deprive Roosevelt of his dollar devaluation powers. As a display of bankrupt opposition leadership, there has been nothing like it since the advent of the New Deal. Nobody stood to gain anything from it except the silver bloc. Senators Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan and Robert Taft of Ohio, Republican presidential aspirants, richly deserved the hangover headaches that were all they got out of the spree. H. Styles Bridges of New Hampshire, who engineered the deal, had his moment of satisfaction, no doubt, over the Administration's embarrassment. But it was the President who got the most out of the ridiculous antics of his potential 1940 opponents.

He got a chance to denounce the Republican hopefuls as connivers-with-Wall Street and made the most of it. While the importance of the issues involved was vastly overemphasized, what arguments there were certainly were on his side. It is recognized that power to take another nine cents' worth of gold out of the dollar, even if exercised, would have no appreciable effect on domestic price levels. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau insisted that the power was useful as a club over the British to keep the pound in line. If Vandenberg and Taft thought at all, they probably thought they were winning the gratitude of investors by warding off further devaluation. But obviously there was no inflationary danger in what was left of the devaluation power. On the other hand, Morgenthau's suspicions of the British may have been well founded in the light of last year's experience with a falling pound.

As for the new silver price, that was indefensible on any ground. And by trying to stop purchases of foreign silver, the coalitionists cut no throats except China's and Mexico's. The only mourners were friends of the good neighbor and open door policies. Whether these policies are worth the cost of subsidizing all silver-producing nations is a debatable question. However, it is notable that the Republicans didn't undertake to debate it. There was no argument over continuing the stabilization fund, yet even this was placed in jeopardy by the reckless tactics of the Republican-silverite coalition.

Vandenberg and Taft again placed themselves in a silly position when the relief bill came along. After shouting for months that a substantial part of responsibility for relief should be turned back to the states, both opposed an amendment requiring 25 per cent local contributions. It was finally adopted over their opposition and despite the warning of Mayor Fiorello H. La Guardia and the United States Conference of Mayors that many states would be unable to make the grade, but only after it had been modified to permit smaller contributions up to January 1. The Senate tried vainly to improve the House bill, which Representative Clifton Woodrum of Virginia, chairman of the Appropriations subcommittee on relief, had shrewdly cut down to less than minimum. Even as amended by the Senate, the bill remains the most conspicuous monument to reaction the present Congress has erected. Its restrictive features will complicate administration and cut expenditures drastically. By tying it up with the monetary bill in the fiscal year-end jam, Woodrum and his associates spiked the guns of the Senate liberals. A protracted fight was out of the question with 2,500,000 relief jobs dependent upon action by midnight of June 30.

The President has only himself to blame for failure of an amendment by Senator James Mead of New York to give the Public Works Administration another $500,000,000 appropriation. Majority Leader Alben Barkley opposed it in Roosevelt's name. Apparently, Roosevelt felt that approval of the amendment would hurt the chances for his $4,000,000,000 program of self-liquidating works loans. Legislation to carry this program into effect will provide the big monetary fireworks of the new fiscal year. With the exception of the foreign loan and toll highway provisions, it seems to have a good chance for approval. A feature of this program, generally overlooked so far, is that Vice-President Garner's ally, Jesse Jones, despite his elevation to the post of administrator of the new federal loan agency created by the reorganization bill, will have nothing to do with the more important lending projects. John Carmody, as administrator of the federal works agency, will be head man, controlling even the railroad loans, which until now have been handled by Jones's Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Another encouraging aspect of the new plan is that Senator James Byrnes of South Caro-

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lina will handle the legislation. By far the most effective parliamentarian in the Senate, his return to the Roosevelt fold means much to the New Deal.

An unheralded battle for enforcement of the wage-hour law will be one of the high spots of the closing weeks of the session. Southern sweatshoppers are almost universally ignoring the law and thumbing their noses at Administrator Elmer Andrews. They can get away with it because his appropriations have been drastically reduced by Southern reactionaries in Congress. Representative Malcolm C. Tarver of Georgia, chairman of the Appropriations subcommittee in charge of funds for wage-hour enforcement, cut $176,000 off the last bill, already inadequate, after failing to get an exemption for the candlewick bedspread home workers in his district. Senator Kenneth McKellar of Tennessee, leader of the Senate conferees, whose state is a sweatshop paradise, accepted the reduction without protest. Meanwhile, Representative Eugene Cox of Georgia has struck back at the Wage-hour Division for citing the Camilla Hosiery Company, one of his home town industries, to the Justice Department for falsification of wage records. Cox has induced his crony, Representative Howard W. Smith of Virginia, to sponsor a resolution to investigate Andrews's agency.

The modified neutrality bill, repealing embargo provisions of the present law, has passed the House and is now before the Senate, where it will encounter determined opposition and probably an isolationist filibuster. Acceptable to the Administration because it in effect serves notice on Hitler and Mussolini that their enemies will get American arms and ammunition in case of war, the new bill undoubtedly will command majority support in the Senate. The President is prepared to sit out a filibuster, if necessary. In foreign, as well as domestic affairs, he is counting on the emotional brashness of the opposition to play into his hands. If Vandenberg, Taft and company keep it up, the new fiscal year will be temporarily painful but it may prove to be only the prelude to a happy election outcome.

Why Hitler Must Bluff

Exhausted Nazi Labor

BY JUDITH GRUENFELD

YOU can enslave men, you can take away from them all their individual rights, you can subject them to forced labor, you can paralyze their thinking with propaganda, but you cannot give them insufficient food—a diet of *Ersatz* products—and then exact from their undernourished bodies a record labor output. This, however, is what Hitler is trying to do. His labor policy is designed to get more work out of men who have less to eat. But even a dictator cannot override physical laws.

Thus the increase of sickness is becoming a major obstacle to Hitler's war preparations. Overwork and undernourishment are depleting man-power. Millions of work-hours have been lost in the past year because of sickness. In fact, according to the official report on sickness among insured workers, "the damage inflicted in 1938 upon German economy by disability—solely among obligatory insured workers—equals the loss of 740,000 units of man-power."

The employment increase in 1938 was almost offset by the loss of man-power through disability, a loss 15.5 per cent greater in 1938 than in 1937. The accelerating tempo of this deterioration of the workers' health is clearly revealed in official reports: in January, 1939, for example, disability was 31.5 per cent greater than in December, 1938. Moreover, in 1938 disabled workers lost an average of twenty-three work days each, which indicates the extent of serious illness. The increase in mortality among workers, according to official figures, amounted to 5.9 per cent in 1936 and 4.3 per cent in 1937; "in 1938 expenses caused by increase of deaths rose 10.3 per cent."

The increasing sickness rate—46 disability cases per 100 workers in 1938, as compared with 31 in 1932—is officially attributed to the "considerable labor strain in 1938." One thinks at once of conscription of labor for fortifications and of the vigorous "efficiency campaign" to overcome the labor shortage caused by new military requirements. And the more man-power the Reich loses by the increase of illness and the mounting death rate, the heavier is the burden imposed on still able-bodied workers. The pressure on labor increases steadily. Professor Arnold, a Labor Front official, in an address before a large gathering of employers in Berlin on February 18 last, stated that the lack of raw materials and labor could be overcome "only through the intensification of labor's efforts—two workers will have to perform in coming years the work performed at present by three workers." Thus "full employment" in Hitler's Reich is not identical with workers' well-being but actually entails their

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complete exhaustion. As Dr. Robert Ley, the head of the Labor Front, put it bluntly, "Socialism in the Third Reich is a hard, manly socialism; not the well-being of the individual but that of the community matters."

But the constant effort to draw upon the laborer's last ounce of energy works in a vicious circle. The Nazis may be willing to achieve "national well-being" by destroying the health of individuals, but the national economy is thereby losing man-power. The *Frankfurter Zeitung,* referring to the recent extension of the work day in coal mining, designed to obtain a 12 per cent increase in output, pointed out on May 7: "The main concern now is whether it will be possible to stop the steadily declining output per capita and shift"; and it gave the following warning: "The strength even of the most ardent workers has limits." The same paper remarked in connection with the general lengthening of the work day to ten and more hours that "people in charge of responsible administrative functions can more easily work longer hours than workers who have to drag cement bags fourteen hours a day. Once health is impaired, it cannot always be restored."

The overstrained workers express a growing resistance by absenting themselves from work after Sundays and holidays. Hence the campaign in the German press against "Blue Monday." In factories in the Ruhr district announcements have been posted threatening severe penalties for workers "who fail in their duty by staying away from work or who intentionally slow down." But no threat can combat the "slowing down" caused either by fatigue or by the "passive resistance" which is aroused by the workers' knowledge that the money they obtain through overtime cannot buy the food and other things they need. Nevertheless, Hitler continues the policy that is responsible for the pressing lack of consumers' goods, importing raw materials for armament at the expense of raw materials desperately needed by industries working for consumption.

Faced by labor's increasing disability and exhaustion, the Nazis are attempting to overcome the factor of physical limitations by their usual method—propaganda. One of the slogans for 1939 stresses a new duty, the "duty of health." The campaign was inaugurated by Dr. Robert Ley himself, who explained: "Since in this new Germany of ours there are no individuals any more but only soldiers of the Führer, it is everybody's duty to keep healthy." The underlying assumption is apparently that individuals get sick for their own pleasure but must keep healthy for the sake of the Führer. The "health duty" is being impressed upon workers through the agency of "health troopers," who have been introduced, with great publicity, into thousands of plants. These "health troopers" add their efforts to those of the so-called *Werkscharen,* whose "main task in the factories," according to Dr. Ley, "is to achieve record efficiency and to induce all workers to do the same." In a front-page article in the *Angriff,* Dr. Ley described the activity of the *Werkschar* as follows:

> The model for any community is for us National Socialists always the soldier. . . . Only because the National Socialist factory community has a military set-up with the employer as chief commander, the factory delegates as sergeant-majors, and the workers themselves, divided into cells and blocks, marching with their flags at the factory's summons, do we maintain the confidence of employers and employees. The *Werkscharen* embody this military spirit.

The health troopers are recruited from "the best members of the *Werkscharen.*" They are supposed to remind the "labor soldiers" of their health duty and to impress upon them that the factory community has no use for "lazybones," "dreamers," and "malingerers." Employers, on the other hand, are urged to improve factory hygiene. At Hitler Youth rallies boys and girls are obliged to pledge themselves to fulfil their "health duty." Yet at the same time a new "youth-protection" law has introduced night work for juveniles into the iron and steel and other war industries.

It remains to be seen how much man-power the Reich is going to lose in 1939 through the increase in disability and death caused by the recent decree lengthening the work day. The Berlin magazine *Soziale Praxis,* published by the Reich Secretary of Labor, Dr. F. Syrup, called attention in its issue of March 1 to the dangerous effects of overwork:

> The eight-hour day is far exceeded in many industries. . . . If one takes into consideration the harm caused to body and soul by the excessive lengthening of work hours, one realizes the negative effect of the longer work day. Labor intensification combined with lengthening of hours means a double strain. . . . The constant increase in sickness since 1936 is a warning to be careful. . . . The great policy of our Führer cannot be carried out by worn-out human material.

The menace of mounting sickness to Germany's military strength has been even more alarmingly signalized by the National Socialist *Monatshefte für Sozialpolitik,* which recalled that just one hundred years ago Prussia introduced the first law in Germany shortening the work day. This was done because the king was alarmed by reports that recruits from industrial districts had been rendered unfit for military service by too long hours of work. "The shortening of the work day thus appeared an urgent necessity for patriotic reasons," the Nazi monthly emphasized. But, it continued, "it so happens that on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of this labor law we are lengthening the eight-hour work day and are facing in many respects just such a problem as existed then." There is a difference, it admitted, in that the long work day was then due to the profit motives of individuals,

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while today it is necessitated by a "national emergency." However, "this does not alter the devastating effects of too long hours on human health." Hence, the Nazi journal stressed:

> We should not forget for a single moment that by lengthening the work day we counteract to a certain extent our military objectives. For what good does it do for us to enlarge our military equipment by all possible technical means if the physical military capacity of our people is being at the same time so reduced that we may one day run short of fit recruits, just as a hundred years ago? This is even more dangerous today because modern weapons, particularly air weapons, require excellent health and nerves which are not worn out.

Meanwhile, the Reich, using its man-power for war preparations, is lacking some 600,000 farm hands, despite the compulsory farm service for girls; herds of cattle have been slaughtered in the Rhineland, according to Minister of Agriculture Darré, because no workers could be found to care for them. Where, then, is Hitler going to get the man-power for his much-advertised war autarchy after the mass mobilization of workers for actual warfare has taken place?

No Food for War

By L. F. GITTLER

CONVERSATION with a German today gives one the impression that the country is going through a period similar to the blockade year of 1917. One hears of the same scarcity and bad quality of foodstuffs and commodities, the same lack of raw materials, the same ingenious substitute products that keep people guessing what they are made of. When Germans speak of these conditions, they reveal a growing anxiety. The food and commodity shortage generates suspicions that they are eating *Wurst* made from dog meat or sick animals, that their shoes and clothing are made of "paper." These suspicions are only partly justified, but the fear psychosis is genuine. Germans have no hope of a better future. Resigned to eventual war, they remember that one million Germans died of malnutrition during the last conflict, when vital foods were unobtainable.

Responsibility for this situation must be borne by the Four-Year Plan, which has placed Germany on a war-economy basis, with the whole industrial set-up concentrated on producing munitions, imports limited to raw materials for military purposes, and home products of good quality shipped abroad in order to obtain foreign currency to buy additional war material. While the population hungers, vast reserves of foreign oil, cotton, and wheat are being stored for military use. A main principle of the Four-Year Plan is to change the food habits of the nation from bread to potatoes, from meat to fish, from fats to sugar. Mass eating in factories, schools, office buildings, community kitchens is being introduced to prepare the country for war-time conditions.

The shortage has made the German the worst-fed and worst-clothed person in Europe. There is a very inadequate supply of staple products like butter, meat, vegetables, eggs, cream, fats, oils, bread, margarine, fruit. A typical meal for wage-earners is a dish of lentils and cabbage. Students lean heavily on *Backobst,* a dish of dried prunes, apricots, and raisins, which also forms the universal German dessert. Soldiers fare better, with sausage, fish, and, during the short season, even tomatoes.

Not only the lower classes suffer. Nutritional disease has filtered into every economic stratum. A young American in excellent health came to Germany to work with the Berlin branch of a large American corporation. Deciding to know the country intimately, he engaged board and room with a middle-class German family. After six months his teeth became loose and his gums swelled and bled. Consultation with various doctors proved futile until a specialist told him that he had scurvy. The American effected a cure by importing lemons from abroad, on each of which he paid a five-cent duty. Illnesses caused by insufficient and poor food have taxed physicians. A doctor in a large Berlin hospital told me that more cases of nutritional disease—scurvy, pellagra, rickets, anemia, general debilitation—came to his institution last year than in the ten years previous to the Hitler regime.

The change from plenty to scarcity can be discerned by anyone who knew the German Republic. Apples, pears, oranges, fruit of any kind is scarce; occasionally bananas are sold in the street by a "German colonial Negro" in a white helmet who hawks his wares in pidgin German to an amused crowd. This is part of the colonial propaganda and hints that if Germany recovers the Cameroons bananas will be plentiful. Restaurant menus are meager, featuring the internal organs of various animals—giblets, kidneys, lung hash, rabbit spine. Meats are always hidden under mounds of flour sauces, potatoes, or dumplings.

The stores are a picture of scarcity. Butter can only be seen during early morning hours two or three times a week. Bakeries cannot sell bread less than twenty-four hours old; so that housewives are not tempted to throw away old bread and to buy new. The bread is grainy, loaded with potato and other inferior flour. Vegetables available occasionally are celery roots, turnips, beet tops, cabbage, parsnips. The milk is bluish, and condensed milk is used as cream. Beer halls do not sell the beloved *Bockbier.* It is being produced only for shipment abroad in barter for war materials.

Lest this shortage result in widespread discontent, the Nazis release certain foods in various parts of the country for limited periods. This accounts for the conflicting re-

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ports of travelers. While one section has butter, another has none. For weeks there are only tomatoes, then cabbage, then dried carrots. Sometimes the much-loved whipped cream is on sale for a week, with all stores announcing the good news on huge placards. A foreigner returning to the Reich after several years' absence notices that Germans no longer carry *Stullen,* sandwiches filled with liver paste, sardines, or the like. In the old days Germans could be seen eating these *Stullen* between meals wherever they happened to be—in busses, movies, the theater, offices, factories.

The unappeased appetite of the war industries has created a crisis in non-armament plants. All raw materials are first distributed to industries producing submarines, guns, tanks, rolling stock, airplanes, artillery. Iron and steel may not be used for building anything not strictly intended for military or semi-military purposes. Factories turning out automobiles, agricultural implements, sewing machines, typewriters, cameras, optical goods must wait weeks for a meager supply.

New houses, even in prosperous sections, have no elevators, boilers, radiators, ice-boxes, not to speak of electric refrigerators. Stoves predominate for heating. Apartment dwellers must wait months before worn pipes are refitted. New telephones are not being installed and old ones are not repaired. Equipment is reserved for army field-telephone systems. Merchants are reopening deep cellars as ice-boxes. Artists have no oil paints to work with. The use of linseed oil by painters entails a heavy fine. Shops do not display wedding or engagement rings. Many craftsmen—shoemakers, watchmakers, tailors, opticians—are idle for lack of material.

In an attempt to cope with the shortage Germans conserve every scrap of food and material in the Reich. The Hitler Youth, the Labor Service camps, old-clothes dealers, scrap-iron merchants, and squads of men with green armbands are enlisted in the *Kampf dem Verderb* (the Fight Against Waste). Placards are everywhere:

> In the Fight Against Waste . . . we all help the Führer to make Germany free and independent. Our duty is to conserve materials which until now were carelessly burned or wasted. That is why we are collecting zinc, copper, pewter, aluminum, lead, bottle caps, tubes, tin cigarette boxes, metal buttons, fiber, string, old paper, tin cans, light sockets, electric bulbs, leather scraps, tinfoil.

Each person has a specific "duty." In households a big poster shaped like a pig is inscribed "I eat" and "I don't eat." It tells us that pigs eat peelings, skins, salads, bones, bread pulp, vegetables, potatoes, egg shells. These must be saved for pigs, for peasants are forbidden to feed them any grain, alfalfa, hay, or rye. Garbage that pigs do not eat—bottles, banana peelings, paper, metal—is saved for other purposes. Big trucks make the rounds weekly collecting these leftovers. Hitler Youth—when they are not raising rabbits as a hobby—collect bones in school, go on scavenger hunts to find old rubber, rabbit skins, horsehair from mattresses, old clothing, pig bristles, objects of brass, iron, or lead, acorns, herbs.

Housewives save all water used in cooking potatoes and vegetables. Meat eaten on "Strength Through Joy" excursions is first cooked in potato soup prepared for army consumption. Women bring their own bottles and bags when shopping. Large signs in all stores declare: "Paper is raw material. Do not ask for more." Clerks are taught how to wrap parcels with a minimum of paper and how to tie knots with a minimum of string.

The potato has come to mean something very precious to Germans. It appears in a dozen forms—in bread, dumplings, pancakes. Determined to supplant bread with potatoes, Nazi research laboratories explore the potato for hidden vitamins and devise new recipes. The East Prussian Junkers who used to extract strong liquor from potatoes are now forbidden to do so. A film shown in all theaters entitled "Potatoes with the Evening Meal" shows food scientists testifying to the "great value of potatoes to Germany and humanity." I saw the film in a middle-class neighborhood, and there was audible grumbling in the darkened cinema when it was tactlessly followed by newsreel shots of Göring, in Tyrolean hat, shooting deer on his estate. The camera lingered on the body of the deer, and when someone in the audience smacked his lips, the house broke into hollow laughter. This might be construed as Nazi humor.

Propaganda Minister Goebbels

Another film used in the "Fight Against Waste" takes us inside the kitchen of a wasteful housewife who is throwing away edible things like vegetable scraps, fruit skins, potato water. Montage effects are skilfully used to show garbage cans piling up until it seems that German women are wasting mountains of food. A final sequence shows a trim housewife in a gleaming kitchen getting dinner with the utmost care and afterward conserving everything that can be used again. The film ends with the narrator's appeal: "Save for the German people and for German cattle the things they need to eat and cannot get because of the sanctions of foreign nations."

Neither elimination of "waste" nor stringent rations, however, have solved Germany's food and commod-

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ity problem. Much research has been devoted to *Ersatz* (substitute) products fashioned out of materials found in the Reich. These are tried out in concentration camps and army stations before they are put on the market. Their quality is poor, inadequate even for peace-time needs, and they cannot possibly substitute for the supplies that used to come from other countries. Yeast is made from wood pulp, coffee from burned oats; fish albumen instead of eggs is used for baking, for mayonnaise, and for sweets. Housewives have lately been using "mineral oil" for cooking. Much progress has been made in the production of synthetic honey and marmalade, and in extracting certain oils from grapeseed.

Field Marshal Göring

Whale oil is now the most important ingredient of margarine. Germany at present produces half the whale oil of the world. But extensive German exploitation of the whale fields is endangering the supply.

Supplanting meat with fish is the aim of one of the big Nazi campaigns. German fish production has doubled in the last six years. But fish consumption remains the same; imports merely have been curtailed. *Ersatz* wearing materials have had a slight success. Cellulose wool and a *Werkstoff* made of wood and fish fiber are of good quality, but are expensive and do not stand up under washing. Berlin department stores have huge signs over their shirt sections: "Do Not Boil or Wring These Shirts." Germans have had sad experience of clothing shrinking 20 to 50 per cent after the first washing, and of shoes, typewriters, and suitcases falling apart after several weeks' use.

Cheap "paper suits" cost $40. Thus German streets are jammed with men and even women wearing their uniforms—army, Storm Troops, Elite Guards, Women's Bund, Hitler Youth, Hitler Girls—as these are of durable material. No woolens at all are available. This lack is illustrated by the experience of an Englishwoman at the German border customs. Several yards of woolen material which she had bought in Czechoslovakia before the invasion were found in the bottom of her suitcase. The officials asked her where she had bought it. "In Germany," she answered, since the Czech state was now a part of the Reich. The officials weighed the material and rubbed the threads between their fingers. They smiled wisely and said, "You never bought such material in Germany."

Soap has been denuded of its fat content and now is made mostly of bicarbonate of soda. Cheap bars cost 20 cents, better bars 30 cents. At that, they have little cleansing quality and work havoc with clothes and complexions.

Synthetic rubber, now used in toothbrushes, is an achievement, but it is expensive and not produced in great quantities. Artificial tires last 4,000 miles at most, one-third the distance of natural rubber. Tires cannot be bought unless the old ones are first turned in to prove the need. Consumption is also curbed by the denial of licenses to applicants who turn curves too sharply and thus wear out tires too rapidly.

The shortage of goods and foodstuffs and the failure of *Ersatz* products to provide adequate substitutes have naturally led to some speculation and not a little hoarding. But the extremity of the shortage makes it difficult even for seasoned speculators to ply their trade. Smuggling is sporadic and limited to cheeses, fats, butter, meats, and margarine in small towns along the border.

Under new decrees hoarding has become an act of treason. Nevertheless, housewives hoard canned foods, condensed milk, sugar for preserves. Storekeepers hoard canned goods, metals, and textiles, and are hard put to it to circumvent the authorities, who make regular inventories of all stock. Merchants are forbidden to order more goods unless their shelves are practically empty. Very expensive stores charge fancy prices for pre-Hitler goods, prized by customers who can afford to pay for them.

Manufacturers cannot order any raw materials until their supply is exhausted. Thus business is a gamble for them, since they cannot plan their production in advance. Government inventory inspectors are alert to spot devices by which manufacturers hoard raw materials.

Nazi propaganda, through press, radio, and films, tries to head off grumbling and discontent. This propaganda follows four main lines:

1. "Germans are not so badly off." Horror pictures culled from the blackest depression era in America show shanty towns, bread lines, bums, garbage-eaters, misshapen children. These are supposed to show the "plight of all Americans"; half of them are faked.

2. The hardships and privations of Germans today are "due to the fact that Germany was clubbed into poverty by unfair treaties and reparations." Hitler said in his last Reichstag speech that Germany's subjection was a result of her having entered conference rooms with no cannon to back her demands. Thus Germany is "temporarily" producing cannon instead of butter, importing iron ore instead of eggs and fruit, and with rearmament accomplished the army will assure a rosy future.

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3. Blazing headlines in newspapers announce that world Jewry has "cornered the international market in onions, sugar, lettuce, and, knowing how much German Aryans love these foods, has refused to sell them to the Reich."

4. Radical Nazis speak with ridicule of "bourgeois stomachs," contemptuously term white bread a "concoction of liberalism" and the eating of good wholesome food the "democratic decadence of gourmands."

But all this propaganda does not alter the fact that the shortage is now a weighty problem and in the event of war will precipitate a grave crisis inside Germany within a few months. Germans know that bad as things are, they can be immeasurably worse—as they were in 1917.

Perhaps the shortage that alarms them most is the lack of competent physicians, caused by the preference of Nazi youth for promising careers in the army, the government, and big industry. The medical course has been reduced two years to attract new students, but more and more often one sees even in Berlin signs on doctors' offices reading: "No New Patients Will Be Accepted This Week."

Social Security for the Joneses

BY MAXWELL S. STEWART

EXCEPT for one blast from a high Administration official charging the existence of certain "inequities," the course through Congress of the proposed amendments to the Social Security Act has so far been surprisingly smooth. The absence of controversy is somewhat difficult to explain. No measure before Congress so intimately affects the lives of so many Americans as that embodying these proposals. None involves an expenditure of comparable proportions. And none is based on a more challenging social philosophy. Yet the House accepted it without a murmur, and it seems likely to slide through the Senate with almost equal ease.

The so-called inequities are mostly matters of detail. But the changes that have been proposed, particularly in the field of old-age insurance, involve far more than mere detail. They are based on a different, and sounder, approach to the fundamental problems of social protection and depend on wholly new principles. These principles deserve careful study, since their application is responsible for many of the "inequities" of which the critics complain. The first underlies the method of computing old-age benefits. Under the Social Security Act as it now stands, benefit payments are closely related to a worker's total contribution to the old-age fund. This is a distinct disadvantage to the middle-aged and older workers, since they can contribute for relatively few years. The result is that the average worker past fifty can look forward only to from $20 to $25 a month upon retirement. He could do better in many states with a non-contributory pension. Clearly the amount is not enough to maintain an elderly man and his wife on a standard of health and decency. It is not social security.

In an effort to avoid this sort of injustice to the older generation, the Social Security Board has recommended that benefits be based primarily on a worker's *average* wage rather than on his *total* wages since the act went into effect. The proposed schedule of benefits is really no more complicated than the old. On reaching sixty-five all persons properly insured will receive a monthly benefit equal to 40 per cent of their average monthly wage up to $50. This means $20 a month for workers who since enactment of the law have averaged $600 a year. The benefits of higher-paid workers will be increased by 10 per cent of the amount by which their average monthly wage exceeds $50. Since wages above $250 a month are not taxable, amounts over that figure do not increase the size of the benefit. But an extra 1 per cent is added for each year worked prior to retirement.

The rigid formula of the present law has also been changed to take account for the first time of the varying family responsibilities of insured individuals. There is to be a supplementary allowance of 50 per cent for wives over sixty-five and for children under eighteen. The lump-sum payment at death is to be replaced by monthly survivors' benefits payable to widows with dependent children, to orphans under eighteen, to widows over sixty-five, and, where there are no other beneficiaries, to dependent parents of sixty-five or over.

The advantages of the new schedule to the generation now approaching retirement can best be shown by means of a specific example. Let us see, for instance, how it works out for Mr. and Mrs. Jim Jones, a typical couple just over middle age. Jim was sixty in January; his wife is a year younger. He earns $100 a month, which is just about the average for the country as a whole. Under the present law his benefit would be only $19.50 a month after he had contributed to the old-age fund for seven years. The new scale will give Jim a basic benefit of $25 with 1 per cent added for each of the seven years, or a total of $26.75. When his wife reaches the age of sixty-five, his benefit will automatically be increased by half and will remain at that point until one or the other dies.

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Thus the new scale will give the Jones family $40.13, or more than double the amount they could hope for under the present arrangement. For them—and for millions in like circumstances—the difference is that between security and extreme poverty.

All is not clear gain, however. Since the new schedule is not expected to cost any more than the present one over a period of forty years, it is evident that the increased security provided the older generation will be obtained at the expense of the generation now getting its start. The projected arrangement is distinctly less favorable than the present one for unmarried men of the younger generation, or for young men with wives considerably younger than themselves. Let us assume, for example, that Jim Jones has a son who is single at thirty-two, earning $150 a month. Under the revised program the son can look forward to only $40.50 a month, whereas the existing schedule would give him $57.50. Even under the present law, a young man of twenty-one would do better to invest his contributions in an annuity in a private insurance company rather than contribute throughout his life to the federal old-age scheme. This will be doubly true under the new schedule.

At first sight it may seem unfair that Jim should profit at his son's expense. Yet the apparent discrimination against youth is based on a sound principle. The existing old-age-insurance plan is not so much a system of social insurance as a program of forced savings. Now it may be wise and necessary to compel families in the low-income groups to lay up money for their old age. Experience has shown that they will not do so voluntarily because it involves a sacrifice in essentials. But forced savings should not be confused with social security. Savings are made in reverse ratio to needs. Those with the highest wages and the most regular work naturally accumulate the largest savings. Men of the older generation, through no fault of their own, have not time enough left to save a substantial amount. In providing virtually the same protection for all regardless of age or the number of contributions, the proposed amendments come much closer to social security than the original scheme. The allowances for wives and minor children are an even clearer step in that direction.

Another important victory for the principle of security as contrasted with that of forced savings is evident in the decision to drop the large reserve for the old-age-insurance fund. By moving up benefit payments from 1942 to 1940, by providing larger initial benefits, and by deferring the scheduled increase in pay-roll taxes, the amendments will greatly reduce the size of the reserve from that originally forecast. This means that the money collected in pay-roll taxes will be used to increase buying power rather than to defray the national debt.

It is true that many anomalies still remain. Some are inescapable. No matter when and under what terms the benefits begin, some individuals will lose out either because their birthdays come a little too soon or because they fail to qualify under the earnings requirement. The proposed amendments will disqualify a few individuals who would be covered under the law as it now stands. This is unfortunate and could still be avoided by a simple clause extending protection to such persons. But as the amendments stand, the number who gain by the changed qualifying conditions greatly outnumber, for this generation at least, those who lose. It would be most unfortunate if the emphasis recently placed on the "inequities" of the new plan should divert attention from this all-important point.

Critics have particularly stressed the fact that persons who do not qualify under the proposed amendments must pay substantial taxes for which they receive no benefits. This is in direct contrast to the situation under the present law, which provides a lump-sum payment equal to 3½ per cent of their total wages to non-qualifiers. To the literal-minded the change may seem unjust. Yet it merely illustrates the divergent principles underlying the two plans. Owing to pressure from conservative interests, the old-age scheme in the Social Security Act was set up as a contract between the government and the individual worker with provision for the full return of each worker's individual contribution. It is the same sort of arrangement as that which an individual would enter into with a private life-insurance company. The amendments are based on a wholly different conception. It is assumed that each person pays his tax, not for his own personal protection, but for the creation of a *system* of social security. As a matter of fact, this principle has long been accepted as the basis of most of our taxation. No one would seriously propose that every tax dollar be earmarked for the benefit of the individual paying it. The idea is no more logical in the field of social security.

Nothing above is meant to suggest that the amendments before the Senate will eliminate all or even the chief shortcomings of the Social Security Act. But the most serious of the remaining defects in the old-age-insurance scheme cannot be blamed on either the Social Security Board or its Advisory Council. The House Ways and Means Committee flagrantly ignored the primary recommendation of these bodies when it refused to grant the protection of old-age insurance to some millions of workers not now covered by the scheme. The Advisory Council had asked that the benefits of the plan be extended to the employees of religious, charitable, educational, and other non-profit organizations. It also proposed that farm laborers and domestic workers, two of the least secure groups in the country, be taken in after January 1, 1940. The discrimination against these groups rests upon no logic or principle. If old-age security is necessary and right for part of America's families, it should be made available for all. Insurance implies the

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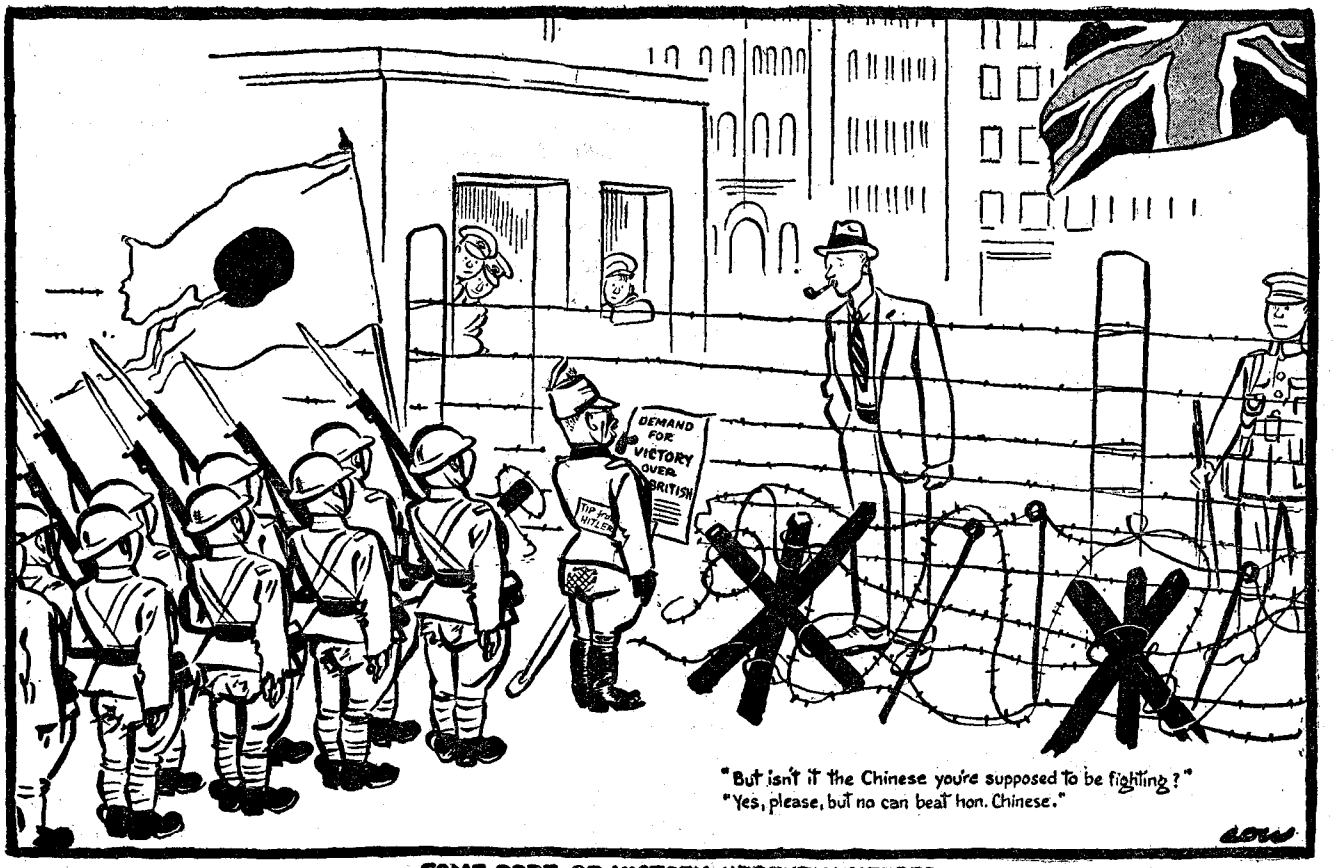
averaging of risks; to achieve this, persons in both protected employments and marginal jobs should be included. Nor can any defense be made for restricting the wives' allowance to those over sixty-five. In most cases the wives of elderly men are a few years younger than their husbands. They are rarely capable of self-support. Unless some aid is forthcoming, they will have to struggle along on their husbands' limited pension until they too reach the magic age of sixty-five. The next largest group of forgotten individuals are those who become incapacitated before they reach the age for retirement. There are many more such than is commonly supposed. At least 125,000 are estimated to be disabled by sickness or accident each year. Their needs are as great as or greater than those of persons disabled by age. Yet while fairly adequate provision has been made for the aged, nothing has been done to relieve the misfortune of disability for these others. In cases of premature death the proposed amendments would provide benefits to the survivors of such of the disabled as retain their eligibility to insurance, but the disabled who live receive no benefits until they reach sixty-five. The degree of protection afforded the families decreases with each year that the disabled are unable to work until it ultimately disappears.

Another fundamental weakness in the proposed schedule of old-age benefits is its obvious bias in favor of the higher-paid workers. This is carried over from the present arrangement. It is true that both schedules contain differentials favoring the lower-paid groups. Yet despite this fact, it will still be possible for a high-paid worker to get twice as much as a worker with a low average wage. This latter differential is obviously not based on need. It can only be defended on the ground that it helps provide the incentives which are essential to capitalism. Against this argument, however, stands the fact that Great Britain has long maintained a flat scale of benefits without noticeable detriment to its capitalistic structure. If, for political reasons, some differential must be preserved in favor of those accustomed to a higher standard of living, it need not be so great as in the proposed schedule. The acceptance of a basic change in principle with regard to years of contribution and dependents suggests that we may soon see the elimination of the bias favoring those needing the least protection. Such an anomaly has no place in a sound social-security system.

The changes which the House has proposed in the field of unemployment insurance are much less satisfactory. Most drastic, and more dubious, is a provision permitting states with adequate reserves to reduce their pay-roll tax below the present minimum of 2.7 per cent. It is estimated that this amendment may reduce the total tax collected by as much as $250,000,000 in 1940. At first sight such a concession seems amply justified. With the present tax rate most of the states added substantially to their reserves even during the severe unemployment of the spring of 1938. These reserves are now well over a billion and a quarter and are growing steadily. Why not take advantage of the favorable situation and afford some


DEMAND FOR VICTORY OVER BRITISH
TIP FOR HITLER
"But isn't it the Chinese you're supposed to be fighting?"
"Yes, please, but no can beat hon. Chinese."
LOW

SOME SORT OF VICTORY URGENTLY NEEDED

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tax relief? A glance at some of the facts in connection with unemployment should provide the answer. In March, 1939, the United States had some 11,000,000 jobless. Only 816,000 of these, or about 7 per cent of the total, were eligible for unemployment benefits in the middle of that month. For the lucky few receiving benefits the average weekly payment for total unemployment was just $10.15. Less than one payment out of twenty was for as much as $16 a week.

It would be well to ask whether unemployment insurance was established for the benefit of business or to aid the unemployed. If the latter, it should be recognized that only a beginning has been made. About all that can be said for the existing set-up is that, unlike many of the early foreign schemes, it is actuarially sound. It has come through a severe recession with money in the bank. But it is difficult to see why this money should, in effect, be turned over to business instead of being used to provide more respectable protection against unemployment. Certainly the proposed tax reduction involves a retreat from the basic principles of the Social Security Act.

With these few unfortunate exceptions the bill before the Senate represents a very definite advance on the road to true security. Before we judge its shortcomings too harshly, we should remember that it is just a beginning. If the experience of other countries is any criterion, the act will be further liberalized and extended at frequent intervals for many years to come. While it might be argued that it would be better to frame a satisfactory program now and interfere with it as little as possible in future years, that is not the way that social-insurance systems are built. Much must be learned by trial and error. But during the trial period there can be no excuse for the continued exclusion of millions of the most needy from the advantages of social protection. Better that the benefits be meager and available for those who need them most than that they be liberal but denied to the chief victims of an insecurity that is not of their making.

In the Wind

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST has emerged from semi-oblivion to supervise personally his chain's drive against the Bloom neutrality bill. Hearst editors are being deluged with instructions from San Simeon on how to wage the fight; the "old man" spent hours on the phone with his New York editors recently, giving them key words—such as the "anti-neutrality bill"—to be used in headlines and copy. He has also ordered lavish publicity for Hamilton Fish's isolationist committee.

IT CAN'T be confirmed, but a bizarre story is now circulating widely in Wall Street. It concerns the $5,000,000 worth of wheat that the United States recently sold to China on credit. According to Wall Street gossip, the Chinese sold the wheat to Japan for cash before it had left this country, then used the money obtained from the sale to purchase American munitions.

M-G-M HAS abandoned plans for the production of "It Can't Happen Here," with the official explanation that the times are "not propitious." The M-G-M studios received ten Nazi newspaper editors on a good-will mission shortly after the edict came down. The studio's public-relations department said the reception was "in the regular line of business."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS issues a syndicated weekly stamp column for its papers. Recently that column reported the issuance of a new 30-kopek Soviet stamp depicting the statue of a Russian worker atop the U. S. S. R. building at the New York World's Fair. In publishing the column the Washington *Star* edited "Russian worker" to read "Bolshevik agitator."

THE NATION recently received a letter which ran in part as follows: "Dear Sirs: In view of the article on page 661 of your issue for June 10, please discontinue our subscription to your magazine. . . ." The article on page 661 was "Royalty Is Not Enough" by Freda Kirchwey. The letter came from the librarian of the Royal Bank of Canada.

SENATOR ROBERT M. LA FOLLETTE ranks high on the Chicago *Tribune's* list of public enemies. The *Tribune* recently published an A. P. photograph of Senators Johnson and Vandenberg leaving a committee meeting. As the picture appeared in other papers, it showed Senator La Follette also, but the *Tribune* had eliminated him.

IMPORTANT PERSONS in American business are praising General Franco more and more outspokenly. This column has previously noted the enthusiastic observations of James Mooney, vice-president of General Motors. Now Joseph W. Rowe, vice-president of the Irving Trust Company, has returned from Spain exulting because "many former causes of strife and political and industrial confusion have been eliminated" and reporting that "with the resultant stability in government, and with labor troubles for the time ruled out, business [in Spain] faces the future with a confidence which has not existed in more than a decade."

CROWN PRINCE OLAV and Princess Martha of Norway recently visited Madison, Wisconsin, and were feted by state officials. During the reception an aside from Governor Heil to the Princess was missed by the crowd but picked up by the radio "mikes." The Governor was saying to the Princess, "I love your hands, I love your face, I love everything about you."

A CONFIDENTIAL bulletin issued to local units from national headquarters of the German-American Bund to local units carries this heading: "Make the Police Your Friends."

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

NEWS of an alarming character has reached me from sources of such importance that it has made a deep impression on me. I should like to believe that it is false, but the authorities for it are exceptionally well informed, especially in regard to the situation in France. It is to the effect that the recent intimations in the New York *Times* and other newspapers that there is another appeasement in the offing, with Poland as the victim this time instead of Czechoslovakia, are correct. Even the terms, I am told, have been agreed upon, and the determined efforts being made by England to mitigate them have not been successful. As the story runs, Hitler is to recover for Germany everything taken from it by the Treaty of Versailles—Danzig, the Corridor, Silesia, and Prussian Poland. Part of Poland is to go to Hungary, another part to Lithuania, while Russia is to get Bessarabia, and Germany another part of Rumania. It is a horrifying possibility, but there it is. If it becomes reality, Hitler will be master of Europe, and England and France will be left helplessly weak and isolated. That this plan is under way is said to be the reason why Russia is hesitating to sign up with France and England. Of course if Hitler should confer Bessarabia upon Russia, he would undoubtedly be able to conclude a non-aggression pact with Stalin and then a far-reaching commercial treaty as well.

What this would mean for England is obvious. It would mean the downfall of the British Empire, especially after the humiliations to which it has been subjected by Japan in China. If it yields now, I cannot see how England can possibly say no to any demand for colonies which Hitler may make. If it said no, he could simply go ahead and take them. Without Russia's aid, and with Germany further strengthened by the accessions I have cited, England could not think of making a military stand against Germany, great as is the British fleet. This would be a most terrible punishment for the follies and blunders of which Chamberlain and his predecessors have been guilty. The crimes of permitting Mussolini to conquer Ethiopia, and Franco to conquer Spain, and Hitler to dismember Czechoslovakia will have been paid for. According to the London *New Statesman and Nation,* the Chinese ambassador to England recently remarked: "The air is black with the wings of the chickens coming home to roost." The *New Statesman* added: "The results of backing the aggressor in China have been as fatal as those of backing the axis powers in Europe. We have gained nothing by it, and the world has lost civilization, freedom, peace, and hope." The alleged deal is in line with the recent statement of the Russian chief of propaganda, Zhdanov, that France and England are playing with Russia just "to clear the way for a deal with the aggressor nations."

Undoubtedly the reader of these lines will say: How can this be when England is arming as never before and France, too, is crippling itself by its tremendous financial efforts to keep up the armament race? Why is it that England is frantically buying airplanes even in this country? Is it all a bluff, is it again mere stage play? Well, it must not be forgotten that a year ago last May two American correspondents of high standing, Constantine Brown and Leland Stowe, announced on the authority of a British Cabinet Minister that Czechoslovakia had been "sold down the river." When their stories were cabled back to England, there was an indignant official denial on the floor of the House of Commons, but what these American correspondents had prophesied came to pass. Of course England and France must keep up the bluff. They will face tremendous opposition at home if they surrender. The French army will be outraged; only last Sunday General Gamelin, the head of the French General Staff, protested against any further appeasement; his speech is confirmation of the story I am reporting. It is hard to see how the British people could endure the degradation of an abandonment of Poland.

As to the border war between Japan and Russia now being waged in Mongolia, some informed journalists believe that Russia is inciting it for the express purpose of bringing further pressure to bear on England. Englishmen must know that if it comes to real war between Russia and Japan, their rights and privileges and trade in China will go by the board whoever wins. A New York *Times* dispatch says that the Germans openly state that they are sitting back waiting for Poland's nerves to crack—and its pocket-book to become empty. Poland has been fully mobilized for six months on a war basis and cannot stand it indefinitely. The Poles are, however, an incalculable people, full of idealism, and they may decide to go down fighting, in which case England would certainly have to join or be branded as utterly treacherous. Well, I can only continue to hope that my information is all wrong, especially in view of Lord Halifax's strong speech, but—strange and terrible things did happen in Czechoslovakia!

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Goods and Social Goods

MAN'S ESTATE. By Alfred Bingham. W. W. Norton and Company. $3.

MR. BINGHAM'S new book is really three books. One is a rather tedious autobiography. The second is a polemic against Marx and the labor theory of value. The final one, the one that Bingham was trying to write all the time, is about what the United States must do to make democracy work. The first detour he takes is autobiographical: he is too sensitive about having been born on the right side of the railroad tracks and having been given a checking account with his first razor, and therefore he wastes too much time in psychoanalytic digressions explaining how he came to change sides. His second difficulty, getting all tangled up untangling Marx from his algebra, arises, I suspect, from the fact that he hasn't really clarified his constructive notions into proposition form. When a man reaches the stage at which he can say, Do a, b, c, and watch things start to hum, he doesn't have to waste much time demolishing idols. My reaction to Bingham or Marx is that I don't care whether Marx or Bingham is right, and that I can see as much to shoot at in Bingham's marginal-utility theory of value as he sees to attack in Marx's labor theory. But I *do* care about knowing what the United States is to do. Unfortunately, he hasn't told me a great deal more about this than that full production, fully consumed, is a good thing. And no one has to be quite as self-consciously radical as Bingham still is about pushing this slogan. It is certainly to his credit that he was one of the first to advance it, but today no one from Herbert Hoover to the old lady in a rocking chair in Peoria will be content with anything less than full production. The question is: How to organize it? Unfortunately, "Man's Estate" ends where it should begin.

This is not, of course, to say that the book does not make many valuable points. One of the most important is Bingham's view that nations are converging from different directions on a new form of economic organization—roughly, state capitalism, or state socialism—which partitions economic activity between administrative centralization and individual freedom, leaving the short end for the latter. He is concerned to have us bargain for as much individual freedom as possible from the American version of this growth. In this connection he devotes a major part of his argument—too much for a book primarily devoted to devising a program for this country—to elaborating the thesis that Soviet communism and German fascism are growing toward the same type of organization, something between socialism and capitalism, which is not primarily a function of class rule, which can best be described as national planning, which relies on the price system to express such individual choice as is permitted, and which manipulates the price system in order to fix the consumption of shoes or potatoes where it pleases. Administratively, he argues, the Soviets have long since abandoned all attempts at socialized distribution and now rely upon coordinated manipulation of prices and wages to control consumption. This differs, he concludes, from the way in which capitalism gets goods distributed only in that wage and price changes are consciously planned, as, of course, is production. As for the German system, his case is best summarized by recalling that Hitler began "Mein Kampf" with a fierce denunciation of all state intervention in individual business management, and then proceeded to crack down on all managements. The Communists started planning, says Bingham, and the Fascists have aped them.

It may be that Bingham's analysis, like all attempts to generalize, is inadequate as a systematic explanation of European economic trends. But unquestionably he has called attention to a drift which cuts through ideological camouflage and shows how goods get produced and distributed and to what programmatic end. Whatever other forces may also be at work here, this drift is evident in the United States.

Bingham himself recognizes one major change effected by this drift toward planned nationalism when he rests his case with a demand for the government to act as the nation's principal investment banker. The German example, taken functionally, not morally, has shown that it is not necessary meticulously to coordinate the production of everything from neckties to canned salmon in order to have a planned economy. To control the flow of investment funds, and thus to determine how much purchasing power is available over and above that created by the production of consumer goods, is sufficient to control an economy's rate of growth; for no change can be supported by the production and consumption of consumer goods alone, which is just an advanced form of bartering spices for loin-cloths. This control the Germans have mastered, and now the British and ourselves are beginning to operate it as well. It is not in itself a political control. It is apolitical; what is political or moral about it is the purpose for which control is exercised—armaments or better living standards. An interesting example of this change is provided by the work of Mordecai Ezekiel, who has influenced Bingham considerably. Originally, Ezekiel advocated all-inclusive coordination of production and consumption, but he has recently modified his view to hold that if government regulates the investment function, it will be controlling the lever that moves all economic activity and therefore won't have to trouble itself about Mr. Schechter's chicken business. The position of the United States with respect to countries farther along in this manipulative art may be illustrated by a point which Bingham develops from the work of L. E. Hubbard, whose studies of Soviet economics are well known. Wages and money values, he shows, are constantly manipulated so as to insure full public spending of purchasing power; Germany also avails itself of price and public-investment policies to draw all money into circulation. The New Deal, on the other hand, as Bingham does

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not go on to show, has invested in heavy contributions to purchasing power, is doing so at this very moment, but its control of the investing function is not sufficient to influence the trend of production. It is precisely the widespread uncertainty about where production and employment are going that is vitiating this governmental contribution, for it was offset in magnitude during the first quarter of 1939 by an equal volume of consumer hoarding and debt liquidation. The New Deal, in other words, has developed no technique for drawing purchasing power out of savings, while its pump-priming procedure is still too much of an emergency-spending and not enough of a permanent-investment affair to determine long-term trends.

Bingham's contribution to this problem is, in effect, to say: Such long-term trends are in any case inevitable, whether for democratic or fascist ends, so let's use them now and for democratic ends. Excellent. The difficulty is that in this field generalities are cheap and inconclusive; the realm of ends, as the philosophers might say, is finished with in a declaratory paragraph about good things. It is in the realm of means—of facts, figures, and organization—that American democrats are becoming impotent, and Bingham, for all his contribution, hasn't provided the key.

ELIOT JANEWAY

Letters of T. E. Lawrence

THE LETTERS OF T. E. LAWRENCE. Edited by David Garnett. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $5.

THE more one reads in Lawrence's letters, the more one finds that he is not in the expected tradition of Burton, "Chinese" Gordon, Blunt, or Doughty, that he is less the flashy empire builder and more the prophet poet in the line of Byron or Blake. Nor is this so strange a combination or inheritance as it might seem at first. His shifty attitude toward the art of writing parallels Byron's captious snobbery of the amateur toward verse which he wrote in his personal style consummately well, and from impulses similar to those of Lawrence. His stated opinions of society in general approach the oracular resolution which rendered Blake lonely and open to the accusation of madness.

Blake, born poor, and Byron, well bred, were children of their own time and of the French Revolution. Lawrence was, above all his contemporaries, a child of the twentieth century. His writing is a testament of the first World War, its aftermath, and preparations for the next great war. The unpublished "Mint" is a prophetic book, and incidentally a work of art, about militarism, socialism, Whitman's "adhesiveness," and the failure of the individual; and although written fifteen years ago, it can be projected centripetally toward concentration camps and the attrition of democracy today. Lawrence's corrosive, self-imposed loneliness was an effort to approach a bedrock connecting him with all his fellowmen. He embraced pain, danger, fright, and conscious hell with his eyes open. It was his misfortune that he seemed to acquire a taste for the pain.

He feared madness and shared certain elementary practices of the mystic. The terrible letters to Lionel Curtis display him in the role of secular saint. Seven years after his strange revelation by the pool of Azrak he underwent a preliminary dark night of the soul which was almost more than his capacities were prepared to bear. Lawrence had no tested technique for self-investigation. He had an instinctive gift for the technique of war; he was to master the technique of literature and of machines. Yet he was without a body of belief supported by the Christian church, Islam, or Buddhism. His only "belief" was in his fellows. He was a kind of Protestant mystic, in itself an anomaly. He could make no coherent system out of history or experience, as Blake or Yeats was able to do. He was more physically active than either, and hence could assume less, intellectually, than either. Instead, with stupendous difficulty, he achieved a work of art, "The Mint." Blake and Yeats paid the price of their originality. They constructed consistent systems and were not enslaved by past inertia, but to a great degree their audiences turned out to be only themselves. Lawrence, besieged by a terror of personal dishonesty and the horror of personal loneliness, constructed a poetic document so transparent that its clarity transcends photography. When "The Mint" is published, its message will be revealed as cold and hot, without any confusing insulation either from Lawrence's fame or the lapse of intervening time.

The reasons for Lawrence's scarred confusions and glancing nervousness are more tricky than in most great men. The psychiatrists' approach to his mystery is as unsatisfactory as the purely Marxian. Lawrence's childhood was the ordinary education of an exceptional person. All his brothers had ability. There was no apparent family conflict. Suddenly, however, his talent for action manifested itself like a genius for poetry or higher mathematics. This activity was not compensatory. He was not frustrated. He employed his particular magic with skill and freedom. In a small way he became a great general. In a side field he possessed unique power. This side show was focused on himself, by himself. No wonder he suffered from revelations of immense power, which, because of his intelligence and experience, he immediately doubted, believing the opposite and fearing his ultimate impotence. His resultant sense of guilt was a moral shame, concerned with obligations to people he loved. He had little blood guilt, though he killed many people. Picture him as placed at the outlet of an electrical circuit. With one hand he shocked himself positively, with the other negatively. Somewhere between there was a short circuit. Part of him was burned. The part unsinged often permitted a free flow, of unusual intensity. The purely physical particles reduced their animation. The emotional and intellectual frequently increased with staggering results. And hence one questions him as a simple neurotic or an imperialist.

It has been brought against Lawrence that not only was he "the father of gold" in the Arab revolt, but that also he miscalculated fatally in backing Feisal rather than Ibn Saud. In 1916 Ibn Saud was little more than a desert prince. His progressive view of Islam, which we recognize now, could scarcely have been seen then, since it was not manifest. Similarly, but far more seriously, it has been asserted by those same young men who might have admired Lawrence most that, like his "step-relative," D. H. Lawrence, he was a misleader, a false socialist, an anarcho-nihilist, and for today's purposes a proto-fascist. T. E. Lawrence lived in a

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pre-Munich world. His guiding frame of mind was post-war. By training and temperament he was an heir of the English nineteenth century. His boyhood was spent in recovering the technical methods of the medieval crusaders. His young manhood was spent in the mastery of the technique of a modern crusade. His maturity was passed among mechanics of motor-boat and airplane machinery. It has been asserted that he was essentially a hater of mankind because he retired into the army, a destructive fraternity, and that he might far better have been a medical missionary in China like one of his brothers or an archaeologist like another. He often spoke of wanting to be a night watchman after his retirement. He realized the self-annihilating service of the army, since it was bent ultimately on destruction—but this knowledge came late, after something like fifteen years in four different branches of the military. As an amateur soldier he embraced arms with a convert's fanaticism. Most seriously of all, they tell us, he was so full of self-love or self-interest that whoever may have admired him never loved him, since he felt no real love for anyone, least of all for himself. They point to his ungenerous remarks on E. M. Forster. The man was his great friend, he admitted—but was he a "great" novelist? A certain intellectual snobbery throws an unpleasing reflection on his monument. Did he ever for a second lose himself sufficiently to discover the true connection between men, in the search for which he finally destroyed himself? Or was his death-will inherent, like cancer, from the start?

After reading his letters no one can assume that his death was an unconscious suicide. All his life he had suffered serious physical mishaps which he ignored. Yet one can't help wondering how he would have behaved had he lived. What would have been his opinion of Munich? Would he have gone back to organize Britain's defenses, as Churchill suggested? Would he have gone fascist? The last question is, I think, preposterous. The slight link with Mosley came before fascism had got its German face; Mosley was rising as a nationalist rebel, and at the time even John Strachey was his friend. His respect for Lenin did not make him a Communist, nor did his efforts to get Trotsky an asylum prove him a Trotskyite. His admiration for Day Lewis, Spender, and Auden shows he was not blind to what was happening. Like Henry Adams, but for a different reason, he was a kind of socialist without being a Marxist.

He anticipated the trouble in Palestine twenty years ago and hoped England would not accept its mandate. He had foreseen the effect of imperial treachery toward the Arabs and Pan-Islam. Would he have written angry letters to the *Times* which again they would not print, or would he have accepted the disciplined silence of the retired army officer? Was his modesty irresponsibility or lack of energy? Would his cynical experience have prevented him from leading an English nationalist movement?

One guess is as good as another: the letters are full of possibilities. I feel that he would increasingly have become an artist. He was finally learning to be as easy in the craft of literature, which he first practiced before the war, as he was in the craft of machines, which he learned with less difficulty later. He would have come to accept his mastery of this technique as he had those of archaeology, war, and physics. The efforts in his life had been paid for in the exhaustion of his personal ambition. I doubt if he would have wished to head any "movement." Put it down to an ultimate perverseness or a final wisdom. He might have proceeded on his quest for consciousness, less perhaps as a crusade than as a quiet hunt; and he would have found his hard-won art a strong support.

There is no space here to praise his wonderful letters as they should be praised, his knowledge of sculpture and writing through their processes, his felicity of phrase, and his descriptive rhythms. The relationship of the letters to his other writings, to "The Mint" in particular, will provide his critics with fodder for years to come. A word must be said, however, about David Garnett's admirable editing. Organized with the greatest intelligence, on an elastic chronological basis, this work could not have been a simple task. Lawrence was frank about almost everything, in particular, about people still living—some of his best friends. Most of this material is preserved. Inevitably, certain omissions are exasperating—five words here, half a page there—and yet one wonders that the Foreign Office was as generous as it was. However, the technical production of the American edition is vastly inferior to the English, in printing, reproductions, paper, and binding.

Lawrence created two nations and ultimately believed the work well done. He hoped for a commonwealth of all the nations and strove toward that end. He held no bias for Britannic might, though he admired many well-known English public servants. He revolutionized motor-boat design and wrote two of the greatest prose narratives of our day. He made an individual effort, as a conscious being, to comprehend the basis of fraternity, and to some degree illuminated it. His means for this research were emotional, physical, and the willed act of his intellect. His considerable technique was faulty, but what Englishman for his time tried as much?

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

Society as Patron

GOVERNMENT AND THE ARTS. By Grace Overmyer. W. W. Norton and Company. $3.

PERICLES, Maecenas, the medieval church, the Medici, monarchs and millionaires have played the role of patron to the arts. Accepted as the function has been, nevertheless there has been a popular misconception about the extent to which artists are dependent on patronage for the fulfilment of their creative growth. "Government and the Arts" shows by a simple and concrete method that at all times and in all countries society has assumed responsibility for the nurture of the arts and that in those societies where the responsibility has been most democratically discharged the arts have thrived best.

After digesting the considerable amount of facts condensed into Miss Overmyer's study, one should never again idly say that the artist, if he is any good, can look after himself. On the contrary, the artist is the creature of the social protection he has received, the practical encouragement which has been accorded him by various agencies and structures. From the Renaissance on, in the Western world, the artist had the aid and comfort of tangible support from king and queen. After

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the Treaty of Versailles, the artist had the aid and comfort of recognition in the new republics. In the United States, in recent years, in the Federal Arts Project of the Works Progress Administration and the section of painting and sculpture of the Treasury Department, the artist has had the widest public aid ever extended to the arts.

That this final development of the relation of the state to the arts is not "'boondoggling" is made abundantly clear in Miss Overmyer's book. Through the Renaissance and during the evolution of modern nations, governmental structures were created—the academies, the schools, the institutes, the Beaux Arts of many countries. In all, fifty-eight nations have answered her inquiries with a mass of factual data carefully compiled in tables at the end of the book. The antiquity and continuity of the tradition of government support of art are the amazing lesson of this research, a lesson augmented by the further fact that in the course of history these agencies have produced more positive than negative results.

Particularly for Americans—reared in hardy individualism —it is tonic to look back on the native tradition. From the founding of the Republic the importance of culture in the nation's life has been appreciated. L'Enfant's plan for Washington is but the first indication of the upsurge of creative and aesthetic energies in American life. The importation of Italian sculptors to decorate the Capitol, the commissioning of John Trumbull to paint murals commemorating the American Revolution, the establishment by Buchanan in 1859 of a Commission of Fine Arts, its reestablishment in 1910, are the steps which lead logically to the present-day renaissance of the arts in America. If any be so hardy now as to declare that the government should *not* employ the thirty or forty or fifty thousand painters, sculptors, writers, musicians, actors, dancers, technicians who have been or potentially may be employed by the Federal Arts Projects, he is going counter to the whole course of American culture, as well as to the practice of civilized countries throughout the world in all centuries.

Miss Overmyer's book is not, however, special pleading. It is a well-documented, simply presented summary of facts. The cogency of its material lies in the inescapableness of its data rather than in the eloquence with which it pleads. Indeed, others will have to do the pleading. Implemented with the arguments contained in "Government and the Arts," they can make an extremely good case for the preservation and continuance of this part of the American tradition.

ELIZABETH MC CAUSLAND

Spies, Plain and Fancy

NAZI SPIES IN AMERICA. By Leon G. Turrou, as Told to David G. Wittels. Random House. $2.

SECRET AGENTS AGAINST AMERICA. By Richard Wilmer Rowan. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.

SECRET ARMIES, THE NEW TECHNIQUE OF NAZI WARFARE. By John L. Spivak. Modern Age Books. 50 cents.

TO THOSE who read mystery stories as a refreshing stimulant against mental fatigue or as a means of escape from too intense preoccupation with their regular work I heartily recommend these three books, whose fascination is in no way diminished by the fact that they deal with truth, not fiction, and that they will be listed in library catalogues as socio-political documents. All three portray an America with which few of us are familiar, an America which, because we are too blind or indolent to see it, is being harnessed to the chariot of the most sinister force in our world today. Perhaps reading these records of foreign espionage in this country will make us realize the importance of keeping a more watchful eye on the practical manifestations of those ideologies which use espionage as a political instrument in their fight against world freedom.

Of the three, "Nazi Spies in America," by Leon G. Turrou, seems less sensational only because the recent trial of Erich Gläser and his associates, around which it centers, were so widely reported and read. That should not prevent our reading it again, if only to deepen vague impressions, to find testimony which we remembered as "perhaps" or "possibly" true backed up by unimpeachable documents and court records. The fantastic network of military, political, commercial, and technical espionage that Mr. Turrou spreads before our eyes is too complicated to be comprehended from fragmentary news reports. It must be seen in the logical sequence of a compilation such as this to be fully understood.

What impresses one most in Mr. Turrou's excellent analysis is the way he traces each plot and conspiracy back to its source in some high office of the German government. At first Berlin vehemently denied these charges, but as each day brought new proof of the direct connection of the Nazi government bureaus with the accused and their accomplices, these protests subsided. "Nazi Spies in America" will be a constant reminder of the dangers that still threaten our liberties.

"Secret Agents Against America," by Richard Wilmer Rowan, is a very different sort of book. The author has devoted years to the subject of international espionage, and the small library of his works covers practically every phase of that perennially interesting subject. His latest contribution to spy lore deals with espionage as practiced by the fascist countries—the Gestapo of Germany, the Italian Ovra, and the widespread spy system of Japan. Needless to say, the divers activities of the Nazi "Bundists" in this country receive the lion's share of attention.

Undoubtedly the most exciting of the three books, however, is John L. Spivak's "Secret Armies." Here you have mystery unadulterated by political preachments. Mr. Spivak's story of how Berlin prepared its coup in Czechoslovakia is thrilling reading. His description of how Italian, Japanese, and German secret agents work hand in hand with official fascist groups in the United States and Mexico and around the Panama Canal will be a shocking revelation to those who think there is safety in isolation.

Most important of all, it seems to this reviewer, is Mr. Spivak's contention that not only Germans but Americans without a drop of German blood in their veins are functioning as secret agents for the Nazi regime. His reproduction of correspondence between the organization of Henry Ford and the Bund and individual German spies makes us understand much better than before why our automobile king was "honored" with the presentation of a Hitler medal. It proves

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that there are Americans—more perhaps than we care to think about—who are prepared to serve National Socialist Germany, not because they are Germans or because they are paid for their work in Nazi shekels, but because they are convinced that spreading its doctrines is for the best interests of their own country.

LUDWIG LORE

History for Art's Sake

EDINBURGH. By Sacheverell Sitwell and Francis Bamford. Houghton Mifflin Company. $4.

LIGHTLY but indelibly certain pages of this entertaining history of "the Paris of Scotland" bear the imprint of the mind of the master of literary artifice who is Sacheverell Sitwell. These characteristically subtle passages are the Introduction with its sly glance in the direction of Auld Reekie's Princes Street and Scottish Military Museum; the bland pages devoted to the architecture of Adam and Playfair and the painting of Raeburn; such graceful accounts of curious consequences of Sir Walter Scott's romanticization of Scotland as Fanny Elssler's ballet La Gypsy and the careers of the brothers Stolberg-Stuart, a couple of harmless impostors who claimed to be grandsons of the Young Pretender; above all, the jewel of the "Pecksniffian style," the final description of George IV's visit to the city of wet clouds, heavy smoke, and piles of Aberdeen granite in 1822. The remainder betray a rapid but less ingenious and inventive pen. Still, the spirit of the Sitwell blows through all of them. A unity, the tasteful, delightfully illustrated little work is purely reporting and narrative history. It neither seeks to motivate the events it recounts nor to present them as an organic progress. Its impulse, in other words, is neither ethical nor logical but exclusively aesthetic.

The relative tenuity of the feeling also suggests the thorough first-fiddleship of the best and brightest Sitwell. Body, density of substance, never supremely distinguishes his art; and the material of this "Edinburgh" for one thing fails to reflect the economic life of the city during its centuries with a consistency that will cause even those unpersuaded of Marx to shudder. Its social life, its civic and institutional evolution, even its philosophy fare little better; its very religion attains only incidental mention. With the exception of art, which in this case naturally figures only toward the narrative's conclusion, what is mainly represented is political history, the series and fortunes of the Scottish kings, statesmen, and captains, their wars and policies, and such municipal events as sieges, conflagrations, capital executions, trials for witchcraft and murders. Yet let none scorn the volume for its texture of political and lurid anecdotes. We have Nietzsche's word for the fact that "three well-chosen anecdotes can achieve the portrait of a man." And the multiple and picturesque incidents reflected by the book have been selected by sharp and thoughtful eyes and as significantly as brilliantly arrayed. They represent the essential Edinburgh: they certainly represent—as all histories do to a degree—the authors', perhaps the period's, feeling about a past very possibly the whole human one. The feeling in this instance would appear to be one of disgust, since its picture is pretty thoroughly a tissue of battle, murder, rapacity, treachery, fanaticism, stupidity, and misfortune, symbolized in the career of the unhappy House of Stuart and set off by a scattering of superior figures like those of Mary of Guise and the Marquis of Montrose. Entirely disgusted it none the less cannot be said to be. For it knows the occurrence of Ages of the Antonines, centuries of rationality and high education. It knows the hundred years in which Auld Reekie was "the Athens of the North."

PAUL ROSENFELD

Hyperindividualism

REALITY. By Paul Weiss. Princeton University Press. $3.50.

PAUL WEISS is one of the most promising of the younger American philosophers, and in this, his first book, the qualities that have gained him a reputation are fairly represented—dialectical skill, ambitious range of interests, and a gift of unusually articulate expression. At its worst that gift becomes purely verbal, trying to pass off for flashes of wisdom, but achieving the hollow resonance of specious oracular depth. But at its best, and that is not infrequent, it bursts into a pyrotechnical shower of epigrams which shed vivid light over dark fields and leave an afterglow of understanding in the reader's mind. "A universal peace is but a figment of deluded spirits, a prelude to a fable; but were all men to feel the heat of the ideal within them, we should soon have a testimony to folly." "The history of fanaticism is the story of the conversion of good men into bad . . . while the history of civilization is almost the reverse, revealing the power of false dogmas . . . to transform incipient evils into goods." These are typical examples.

Brilliantly written though this book is, its content will disappoint all those who, like the reviewer, are in revolt against the claims of philosophers in the grand style. A philosopher who today claims that his aim is to understand "the universe in its eternal character" must not be surprised if he is thought by us moderns to be conceited and dated. For we are uncompromising relativists, and not likely to sympathize with that peculiar disease of the mind, that metaphysical arrogance, which leads its victims to suppose they can transcend their finitude. We moderns are content to leave the eternal character of reality to God. And of Him we say, with Weiss himself, that "He is a hypothesis defining the locus of a metaphysician's distress." As for reality, even with a small *r*, we are too wary of emotive onions to waste much time peeling them down to a kernel we know we won't find.

A more serious quarrel with Weiss will arise out of his belief in the absoluteness of the individual, fundamental to his conception of the world. Weiss flatly rejects the efforts of his contemporaries to conceive the universe as continuous and the individual as relative. "Ontological individuals . . . are obdurate basic metaphysical facts," we are told dogmatically. And from that alleged truth Weiss derives a predatory notion of the individual which the heirs of the Robber Barons, the Girdlers, Fords, and Whitneys, are fighting desperately to retain as the guiding principle of our social life, for it is the principle which has enabled them to climb to

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the top of the heap, and it must therefore be the eternal character of reality. "The essence of the individual consists not in a bare tendency to preserve itself but in a tendency to incorporate within itself whatever others there may be, so that it may become self-complete." Or, "The individual does not endeavor to realize ends which are more real than itself, but endeavors to absorb all other realities in the effort to attain a state of absolute completeness." Thus the full force of a gifted mind is bent to the task of defending a reactionary philosophy which we have been forced to abandon not only for moral but for theoretical reasons. But nowhere within this book are these reasons given a fair hearing.

As a philosopher Weiss aims to give us a statement of reality "so universal and complete that there is no feature but which can be seen to be a specialization of it." But when we look at it, his philosophy turns out to be a belated rationalization of an ephemeral economic system in its last contortions of decay. Of course of a man like Al Capone or Göring it is true that "the very essence" of his being "is to endeavor to actually embody in itself the whole of reality." But while this is true of psychopaths and barbarians, it is certainly not true of the subhuman or of the inorganic or, much less, of the rational levels of nature. And only on an utterly barbaric scheme of values could the devouring tendency which defines the worst individualism of a moribund culture be adjudged a drive toward perfection. Strangely enough, the refutation of Weiss's conception is found within his own book, for he tells us that "there are no fixed, unpassable boundaries in nature." Reflection on the full meaning of this sentence would have shown him that his concept of the individual must be wrong when taken as the basic feature of the world. But since it does define the egregious hypertrophied individualism of a culture that is dying, Weiss's book furnishes us with a most appropriate epitaph for it.

ELISEO VIVAS

The Word War

ALLIED PROPAGANDA AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE IN 1918. By George G. Bruntz. Stanford University Press. $3.50.

"AN accurate estimate of the relative importance of the part played by propaganda in bringing about the collapse of the German Empire is impossible," according to Mr. Bruntz; nevertheless, it "could not help but have an effect . . . and without a study of the part it played no historian can come to a real conclusion as to the causes of the collapse." The Nazis, blind to the military defeats of 1918, the effects of blockade, and the uselessness of struggling against weight of numbers once America had had time to bring its troops into action, have invented the theory of the Stab in the Back, which lays all the blame on revolutionary agitation sustained equally by Bolshevist and Allied propaganda. Whatever part it played in the last war, propaganda will not be neglected in the next. Mr. Bruntz's study has therefore more than a merely historical interest.

American organization followed that which had been evolved by the English and French, but provided the weightiest propaganda—Wilson's speeches. His sincere reasonable-

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ness left the Germans little to fear from peace. The contrast between the Fourteen Points and the terms their own leaders had imposed at Brest-Litovsk was bad for morale. When German newspapers made omissions in Wilson's speeches, the French distributed full reports by airplane, with the mangled German version in parallel columns, to convict the authorities of lying, until they had to print Wilson in full. Undoubtedly the Germans, in surrendering, relied on him.

Mr. Bruntz examines the content of Allied propaganda and the means taken to distribute it in Germany and the German army. True accounts of defeats suppressed by the German censorship ("The number lost in one of our regiments as given in the British leaflets tallied exactly with the actual loss. Hence thereafter the entire contents of the leaflets was believed," says one German historian); statistics of American preparation; accounts of starvation in Germany contrasted with plenty, even in prison camps, in France and Britain; and always blame for the Hohenzollerns and exoneration for the German people, were dropped from airplanes, automatically released from little balloons drifting on the wind, shot from trench-mortars, showered from shells carrying several miles, smuggled over frontiers from neutral countries, floated down the Rhine from Switzerland in canisters or across Lake Constance in toy sailboats.

Mr. Bruntz relies in part on recent German writers apt to exaggerate the effect of our propaganda. His arrangement of his material leads to some repetition. His translation of German is clumsy (*Vorsicht!* is by no means "Foresight!"), and there are other irritating marks of haste, as when he calls M. Briand "Prime Minister of Foreign Affairs." Still, his book is a useful contribution to the history of an increasingly important subject.

BASIL BUNTING

Shorter Notices

AMERICAN EARTH. By Carleton Beals. J. B. Lippincott Company. $3.

Mr. Beals's book, subtitled "The Biography of a Nation," is an impressionistic historical survey, aimed rather at broad underlying principles than at specific events in chronological sequence. His chief and passionate interest is the land itself, which once seemed so limitless and now constitutes such a formidable national problem: how our ancestors got it, what they did with it, what we are doing with it today. In his usual vigorous, biting language Carleton Beals throws his light on the abuses that have accompanied the westward thrust of the frontier, from the shameful oppression and deceit that blacken the whole story of the white man's struggle against the Indian to the confused jumble of present-day farm policies. "We have," he protests, "abused the American earth. We have destroyed much of it. . . . We have been greedy for the profits of a day, forgetting that the American earth is the greatest heritage we can pass on to our children, to our nation. It is our nationality." In spite of the gloomy picture, spotted with blood, waste, degradation, just as it is lightened with heroic struggle and iron determination, he closes with some practical criticism, and a hopeful challenge to America: to plan its national welfare in terms of the right to work, decent living standards, security, and justice between men and classes.

THE VOYAGERS AND ELIZABETHAN DRAMA. By Robert Ralston Cawley. D. C. Heath and Company. $4.

In scope this book greatly exceeds its title. Professor Cawley has traveled well down into the seventeenth century, considering both dramatic and non-dramatic literature, prose and poetry, major works and minor, in his search for allusions to the newly expanded world, the world of the great voyages. If he missed the Humber and the Ganges in Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress," one may safely guess that hardly a dozen other references have escaped him. An incredible wealth of such references is recorded here, fenced in by hedgerows of footnotes, classified by region, by country, by subject. This study may bring to mind Professor Lowes's "Road to Xanadu" so far as it suggests immediate origins, particularly in books of travel, for figures of speech or casual themes in literature, but it lacks the stress upon imaginative processes which makes that book notable. Professor Cawley has not exceeded his task by indicating its worth. In two or three paragraphs he briefly concludes that progress was made in geographical accuracy by dramatists and others because of the printed accounts of the great explorations, but that is all. Surely a study of so conspicuous an element in a great literature should have yielded much more! As to the economic urgency behind these accounts, particularly those assembled by the Hakluyts, he fails to touch upon this or to use other material with which he is obviously familiar in this connection, though to do so might have provided a brilliant cross-illumination, even on the imaginative side, for his subject.

MUSIC

THE people who organized the American Lyric Theater might have said: We will set up a theater in which we will use American singers, a stage designer like Robert Edmond Jones, a conductor like Fritz Reiner, to produce operas in a way in which they are not produced by the Metropolitan; a theater in which we will give works the Metropolitan does not give, and those that are better given in a smaller auditorium than the Metropolitan's; a theater available on the one hand to an American composer who may write an opera worth staging; a theater available on the other hand to the public that is interested in opera but unable to afford the Metropolitan's prices. And deferring to the realities of the situation—what American composers can offer, and what American audiences will pay even low prices to hear—they might have begun with "The Marriage of Figaro," which Reiner and Graf produced so successfully with young American singers in Philadelphia a few years ago, or with "Carmen." In this way they would have created a theater and a repertory that might have attracted an audience.

What they actually said and did was very different. The kind of thinking that went into the project is exemplified by two consecutive paragraphs of the prospectus, the first of which begins with the statement, "Interest in music in the United States has grown amazingly in the past twenty years," followed by illustrative figures, and the second of which begins with the statement, "One of the strongest forces in building up this wave of interest in contemporary music is the

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sixteen-year-old League of Composers." The first statement is fact; the insertion of "contemporary" in the second is an example of how fact is falsified by verbal manipulation; and a good deal of the time the manipulation is of terms that are not even rooted in fact to begin with.

In every country, according to the thinkers of the American Lyric Theater, there lies between popular musical comedy and grand opera the field of lyric drama. This differs from grand opera in being intimate, in being native—that is, "rooted in folk material, and providing the necessary opportunities for native librettists, composers, singers, and artists"; it is therefore "the one manifestation of musical art that has had, in all countries, the most popular appeal," and the source of "the great music of every nation" and of grand opera in particular. And our own country, too, has its composers and librettists bursting with talent which, as the talent of Americans, is specifically adapted to the creation of an American lyric drama "out of indigenous material"—a lyric drama which will be "a natural not an imported product, intimate in character," and appealing to Americans because it "will speak to the people in their own language on familiar subjects." The one thing that has prevented the creation of such a drama here has been the lack of a producing theater for which the talent might work—"the large dimensions of the [Metropolitan] Opera House being more suited for the standard grand operas of a foreign pattern"; and the American Lyric Theatre is to fill this one need.

But if one looks at the other countries one finds that the more intimate operas are things like Mozart's "Seraglio" and "Figaro," Verdi's "Falstaff," Debussy's "Pelléas," which are not rooted in the folk material, either dramatic or musical, of the composers' countries; one finds that not only these but works like "Der Freischütz" and "The Bartered Bride," which are rooted in folk material, are part of the repertories of the great opera houses; and if one turns back to this country one finds that these works have been given at the Metropolitan, and that the American public has not found them any more difficult of access than it has foreign painting, literature, drama, or films, and has preferred them to native products like "The Man Without a Country.'

The organizers of the American Lyric Theater also produced two American operas "illustrative of these purposes and of the organization's high artistic standards"—and illustrative, presumably, of the hitherto unused riches of native talent. And if one considers on what they chose to lavish the skill of a Jones and a Reiner, the expense of scenery, costumes, singers, chorus, an orchestra of fifty-two and a stage-crew of twenty-five at union rates—if, that is, one considers "Susanna, Don't You Cry" with its "'symphonic" mistreatment of Stephen Foster's music in every possible European style that does not fit, and the feeble score for "The Devil and Daniel Webster," one must conclude that these people not only were ignorant and muddled but did not have the minimum of artistic brains and taste that could recognize talent and lack of talent when they encountered them.

But it turns out that "Susanna" was produced because $50,000 came to the American Lyric Theater from someone who wanted it produced; and events proved in this instance that a theater with neither artistic brains nor integrity behind it could not win an audience.

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editor

"The Prejudiced Mind"

Dear Sirs: Ruth O'Keefe, in her inquiry as to whether "a Catholic can be a good citizen of a democracy" in your issue of May 27, points out that "non-Catholics can do only harm by exaggerating or misunderstanding the situation" she describes. One wonders, therefore, why she has appealed to a non-Catholic reading public, as it seems quite certain she has done in writing in *The Nation,* and how, if she is still a practicing Catholic, she could have been guilty of such unfortunate exaggeration and misunderstanding.

Miss O'Keefe admits that Catholic bishops, priests, and members of Catholic lay organizations "have the same right to express themselves as other citizens." It is when she suggests that they have attempted to coerce those who conscientiously disagree that she is guilty of what, by a euphemism, may be called exaggeration and misunderstanding. She should know that no bishop and I dare say no priest told Catholic people how they must stand on the Child Labor Amendment. They might do that, and would be justified in doing so, on any grave moral issue such as compulsory euthanasia for the aged and ailing. But for other matters they merely explain the whys and wherefores of their own views to the people who rightfully look to them for guidance. After all, Monsignor John A. Ryan and the late Frank P. Walsh were not excommunicated or even silenced for their ardent championship of the Child Labor Amendment—nor was Bishop Lucey.

It is a mark of the prejudiced mind not to inquire into the reasons underlying an opponent's position but simply to dismiss it as "medieval," "reactionary," "fascist," "communist," and the like. And I believe that many supporters of the Child Labor Amendment have done a disservice to the cause in refusing to see that its opponents are not all of them merely selfish Bourbons and lick-spittles of Bourbons, but that the language of the proposed amendment gives some reason for apprehensiveness concerning the extent to which the federal government would be given control over the child. And that is a matter concerning which Catholics are and must be very sensitive, and, in fact, an attitude for which our left-wing liberal friends have praised us whenever it suited their purposes, as when the late Pius XI withstood Mussolini over the issue of Italian Catholic Action (for youth) and when Cardinal Faulhaber and the prelates and priests of Germany fought Hitler every inch of the way over the education of Catholic children.

The really deplorable thing about Miss O'Keefe's article, and especially its publication in *The Nation,* is that it comes at a time when the manipulators of the United Front and its supporters are making very obvious efforts to separate the faithful from their bishops and priests—trying, in other words, to provoke an extreme anti-clericalism in this country. I have no idea whether Miss O'Keefe had any such notion in mind; but that is the purport of her article nevertheless. And it is most unfortunate for all concerned. For there are all kinds of people in the Catholic church, including liberal, reactionary, middle-of-the-road, and undecided. And the genuine liberals outside the church will stand a better chance of securing support for their liberal policies from the "middle-of-the-road" and "undecided" Catholics by showing friendly feelings for the Catholic "liberals" than by attacking and maligning the Catholic "reactionaries." Certainly you will get nowhere by lumping all bishops and priests together as "reactionary" and by labeling the late Pius XI, one of the greatest liberals (in the better sense of that word) of our day, as a puppet of Italian Fascism.

EDWARD J. HEFFRON
Executive Secretary,
National Council of Catholic Men
Washington, June 18

Who's "Prejudiced" Now?

Dear Sirs: Questioning the Catholicism of a person who ventures to criticize or oppose the clergy is a time-worn device to discredit his opinions, as at least one of the members of Mr. Heffron's board of directors can testify. The question seems to imply that no one can criticize the church from within. I am a Catholic, of a Catholic family, married to a Catholic, and with four fine Catholic children. I had two perfect years in a French convent before the separation of church and state and have missed ever since the tolerance, kindness, intelligence, and spiritual beauty I knew there. If I see the church which I have known in its most perfect form enter upon courses which seem to me and to many others disastrous, may I not speak?

The facts as to the Child Labor Amendment were as I have stated them. I speak from a long and disillusioning experience in Massachusetts. I did not mention coercion. If Mr. Heffron feels that these facts imply coercion I will not deny it. Legislators whom I interviewed said, not once but many times, I'd like to vote for the amendment but I do not dare. These were experienced politicians, not children. Mr. Heffron knows what they feared just as well as I do. In Massachusetts the church has been able to reward the politically docile by pressing for state appointments, and has done so with some notoriously incompetent people. The church has been able even in recent months to prevent the appointment of the politically recalcitrant, even though exceptionally competent.

I am interested in Mr. Heffron's description of the "marks of a prejudiced mind." Has he "inquired into the reasons underlying my position" or has he simply dismissed me with the implication that I am a renegade Catholic?

If Mr. Heffron will reread the article he will see that I am describing a tendency, not a completed process. I did not lump all our clerical leaders together. It is quite true that we still have among our clergy and among the princes of the church liberals whom we all honor from our hearts and to whose policies we can give complete allegiance. It is a little disheartening that when the question of liberalism in the church comes up it is always the same small handful of distinguished men who are used for demonstration purposes. It indicates better than anything I could say how overpowering the other tendency in the church has become. As to silencing—Monsignor Ryan was silenced as far as Massachusetts is concerned.

Mr. Heffron asks why this article was published in *The Nation.* If he will name in these columns a Catholic journal which would accept and publish such an article he will do a service to many beside myself. There are other Catholics who have sought in vain an opportunity

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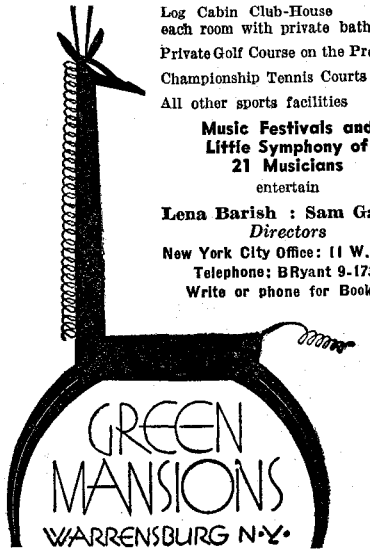

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to speak to Catholics of their Catholic perplexities. I am grateful to *The Nation* for its hospitality, and so, if I may judge by my recent correspondence, are many other Catholics. RUTH O'KEEFE
Boston, Mass., June 23

Stassen on the Skids?

Dear Sirs: With old-timers of all parties asserting that they "have never seen a governor skid down hill so fast," with even Republican resentment at the point where the party giants have met secretly to pick his successor, with the voters of Minneapolis in such spontaneous revolt that—despite lack of good Farmer-Labor campaigning and even some deliberate mismanagement—the Republican mayoralty candidate recently came far closer to defeat than in the election of 1937, *The Nation* on June 17 treated its readers to a forecast of a liberal defeat in 1940 in Minnesota.

Arville Schaleben's report is sheer propaganda, and here is the proof:

1. Labor revolt against the labor-relations act which Stassen is credited with maneuvering from the Old Guard is so strong that either the law will be permitted to rest in the dust bin or open violence will break out. And the labor movement is again becoming the solid core of the Farmer-Labor Party, united on a virulent anti-Stassen basis.

2. The jokers in the "state's first civil service law" are such that its enactment can only be compared to the *repeal* of civil service in Michigan.

3. By "improved social security" Schaleben doubtless refers to the Homestead Lien bill, which forces the aged to choose between the receipt of old-age assistance and the bequeathal of the homestead to their descendants. No event since the hard times of 1933 has produced more resentful protest. Or perhaps the reference is to the current discharge, on twenty-four hours' notice, of the key figures in the Public Assistance Division, the one department in which professional efficiency and nonpartisanship had reached a peak under the Farmer-Labor administrations.

Nation readers have probably never been told of the theatrical coach who over a period of at least two years carefully drilled "Red" Stassen to gesture, talk, and appear like "Red" Olson—this as part of the *very* liberal state campaign prepared and directed out of national Republican headquarters. Signs of an equally thorough coaching for an assault on the White House are only too apparent to those of us close at hand.

W. R. SASSAMAN
Minneapolis, Minn., June 23

[We asked Mr. Schaleben, as a reputable journalist, to make an objective survey of the North Central states. In his judgment prospects for a liberal victory in 1940 are not as bright as Mr. Sassaman thinks they are or as we would have them, but that would indeed be flimsy ground upon which to reject his report. We agree with Mr. Sassaman about the accomplishments of the Stassen administration and we wish that Mr. Schaleben had been more critical. We do not make it a practice, however, to insist that the views of our contributors conform with our own opinions. Our columns are always open to criticism of material that appears in our pages and we are glad that Mr. Sassaman has taken the opportunity to point out the reactions to the Stassen program, but what he calls his "proof" that Schaleben's article is "sheer propaganda" is an example of non-sequitur in its purest form.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

Information, Please

Dear Sir: I am preparing a doctoral dissertation on Wendell Phillips and I should welcome any information about him, particularly manuscript letters. Any material lent to me will be given the utmost care, returned promptly, and duly acknowledged. My address is 245 West 107th Street, New York.

OSCAR SHERWIN
New York, June 18

CONTRIBUTORS

JUDITH GRUENFELD is a contributor to the *International Labor Review* and various European periodicals.

L. F. GITTLER lived in Germany for some time studying propaganda methods. He is now at work on a book to be called "Return to Berlin."

ELIOT JANEWAY is on the editorial staff of *Time*.

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LUDWIG LORE conducts a column called "Behind the Cables" in the New York *Post*.

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ELISEO VIVAS is a member of the Department of Philosophy of the University of Wisconsin.

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